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ABSTRACT

A two-hour training program for volunteer adult discussion leaders was evaluated in relationship to teaching methods and participant characteristics. The program consisted of a slide/tape presentation, a concept lesson, and a group discussion in which leaders plan a lesson for the local group meeting they are to lead. A literature review examined study group effectiveness, training volunteers in peer teaching, and research and theory on teaching adults. Subjects were 192 Hennepin County, Minnesota, adult women who recieved the training as discussion leaders for that county's 1979 November extension homemaker study topic "Coping with Change Crisis and Loss in Your Life." Three treatment groups were devised: all leaders took a pretest: one group was posttested after the slide/tape, one after the concept lesson, and one at the end of the whole program. Results of statistical analyses showed a significant improvement for the total sample in both their knowledge of and attitude toward the role of discussion leader and toward planning and facilitating a group discussion. However, there was no statistically significant difference among treatment groups in improvement scores and little relationship between individual improvement and the background variables of age, educational attainment, number of times having been a lesson leader, and number of times having led a group discussion. Participants rated the program highly. Implications are presented for further research and for those involved in educating adult educators who work with volunteers. The slide/tape script, discussion questions, and pre- and posttest are appended. (JT)

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AN EVALUATION OF A VOLUNTEER LEADER TRAINING PROGRAM ON DISCUSSION LEADERSHIP

Plan B
Presented to
The Faculty of the Graduate School
University of Minnesota

In Partial Fulfillment
Of The Requirements For The Degree
Master of Arts

by
Lorilee R. Sandmann
June, 1980

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background Situation

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith Lever Act, establishing a partnership educational effort of federal, state and county governments known as the Cooperative Extension Service. This legislation charter called for the Extension Service to be the outreach effort of the land grant colleges. Through a network of county offices, the Extension Service is "to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same." (Joint Committee Report on Extension Program, Policies and Goals, 1948). A small staff of state extension subject matter specialists and program leaders reinforce county extension agents in fulfilling this charge.

One method of Extension program delivery is called leader training. Leader training is the training of adult volunteer leaders to teach a subject to peers or youth. To prepare leaders for the teacher role, leader training meetings are conducted. Such meetings provide instruction to volunteers in a particular subject and in methods of teaching that subject. It is an understood expectation and responsibility that trained volunteers will "extend" the information to their local units.

For the purpose of this study, the volunteer leaders are those of Extension Homemaker groups. Community based and organized, Extension

Homemakers are women who meet for the purpose of non-credit study of family living topics. The goals of the Extension Homemaker program can be broadly categorized as education, leadership, community development and personal growth. (Extension Homemaker Study Groups - Position Statement, 1979). Much of the learning that goes on within the program is a result of training volunteer leaders. Women in Extension Homemaker groups take turns volunteering to be leader teachers, with different individuals serving as teachers each month.

The content and curriculum of the educational program for Extension Homemaker groups are determined through a process of needs assessment, situation analysis, and determination of resource availability.

The approach most frequently used to train Extension Homemaker volunteer teachers is the county-wide leader training meeting. At this time, a subject matter specialist presents the content which will be taught and offers suggestions as to how the content can be presented or taught to the Homemaker groups. There is no recommended single teaching approach for the volunteer teachers to use, but group discussion, lecture and method demonstration are the techniques frequently used.

Group discussion is often appropriate to teach a particular study topic. It is also commonly assumed that the volunteer teachers have the necessary skills for using group discussion effectively in teaching their lessons.

The investigator, in questioning this assumption, designed a "Discussion Leader Training Program" and evaluated its effectiveness in training volunteers in discussion leadership.

Consisting of three components, the "Discussion Leader Training Program" includes a slide/tape presentation, a concept lesson, and group discussion. The slide/tape presentation introduces the concept of discussion leader and covers discussion leading procedures and problems. A concept lesson defines attributes of the concept of discussion facilitator and provides experiences in concept discrimination and generalization. The group discussion component provides an opportunity for the leaders to plan a lesson for their group meeting and to practice discussion leading techniques. This instructional package was developed:

1. To answer volunteer leaders' expressed anxiety and perceived inability in the role if discussion leader,
2. To respond to a county extension agent's admission and home economics supervisor's observation that county agents lack sufficient competence in presenting teaching techniques, and
3. To maintain the importance of leader training as one of the Extension Service's widely utilized methods of teaching clientele.

The following common characteristics of a leader training meeting provide the context within which the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was used:

> A paramount consideration is a time constraint. Evolving from full day meetings, Extension Homemaker leader training meetings are now usually two hours in length. Leader training meetings are held at times to accomodate family, home and personal care taking and paid employment.

Positive psychological factors are that:

- the leader has volunteered to take the training;
- the environment is supportive between staff and volunteer and volunteer to volunteer;
- the leader is supplied with written and sometimes visual materials to use in teaching at the local group meeting; and
- the leader training does not involve tests.

Negative psychological factors involve:

- the volunteer's mind set of low self-esteem and feeling of inadequacy at teaching their peers a subject in which they perceive a lack of expertise;
- the volunteer's feeling of being overwhelmed with the amount of subject matter presented;
- participants at the leader training meeting generally do not know each other; and
- some individual's low commitment to teaching due to their expectation that the Homemaker group membership is social rather than educational.

The Problem

The widespread use of volunteers as leaders is in itself one of Extension's important contributions to the field of adult education. Several studies provide insights into both the scope and magnitude of the efforts of Extension volunteers. Prawl (1978) found the average Kansas Extension Homemaker gave 220.3 hours of leadership time each year. Twenty-five and two tenths hours were spent receiving training. Another 40.8 hours were spent annually preparing lessons for local meetings. This volunteer service is three and one-half times greater than the 58 hours per year estimate made by Redeker in 1974, and two and one-half times greater than a 1973 survey of the National Extension Homemaker Organization (Mann, 1974). The 220 hours are somewhat lower than the 290 Extension Homemaker officers "organizational leaders" said they spent, as determined by Carr (1978).

While the amount of time volunteered is impressive, the effectiveness of these volunteers -- placement, training, development, and output -- is an equally important concern. Naylor (1976, p. 122) in Volunteers Today - Finding, Training and Working with Them, states:

> A voluntary organization has an imperative obligation to insure that the whole learning experience offered is truly worthwhile and needed by each individual invited to attend - for his job requirements and for his own growth needs, if the job objectives are to be achieved in accordance with the ideal for the organization. A truncated understanding of the importance of either objective tends to limit the potential benefits from the training for the individual and ultimately for the organization itself. A poor training experience is a double loss for volunteer service - loss of the potential volunteers, or at least decreased effectiveness, and a negative image about training to be overcome before it prevents others from attending.

Since the continued existence and effectiveness of agencies such as the Extension Service depend on the effectiveness of its volunteers, it seems imperative to study the process of volunteer training and to evaluate methods or combination of methods of teaching which contribute to volunteer effectiveness.

There are more opinions than actual research findings on training volunteers as teachers of adults. It is even more evident when narrowed to training volunteers in discussion leadership. While there is no lack of discussion leader manuals, there is a lack of evaluation of methods to train people in discussion leadership. Again, while there is much literature on the use of instructional methods and media, there is a specific lack of knowledge about the use of instructional methods and media in training adult volunteer discussion leaders.

The significance of this study is that the outcomes can be used to address the practical concern of improving volunteer leader effectiveness. On a theoretical level, it can contribute to an understanding of the leader training process and provide insights into a combination of methodologies for training volunteers in discussion leadership.

By evaluating one combination of methodologies for training adult volunteer peer teachers in discussion leadership, this study can contribute to a data base about effective training of volunteer discussion leaders.

Purpose

This project was concerned with the evaluation of the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program". The evaluation was designed to obtain information about the following questions:

1. Did leaders increase knowledge scores and attitude ratings after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program"?
2. Which of the three components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was associated with the greatest increase in knowledge and attitude?
3. Did the program work better for different learners in terms

of amount of experience as a leader, amount of experience as a discussion leader, age and level of educational attainment?

4. How did the leaders rate the "Discussion Leader Training Program" in terms of technical quality and helpfulness?

Study Plan

A quasi-experimental design using non-equivalent treatment groups (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) was this study's design. The study subjects were 192 Hennepin County, Minnesota, adult women who received training as discussion leaders for that county's 1979 November Extension Homemaker study topic "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss in Your Life". The subjects participated at one of five training sites. Three treatments were used in a way that all leaders could receive the complete training program in order to execute their discussion-leader role and to be in accord with the rights of human subjects in research.

All groups were pretested prior to participation in the "Discussion Leader Training Package". Posttesting was done at different times. Treatment Group A was posttested after the complete treatment -- seeing the slide/tape presentation, working through the concept lesson and participating in group discussion. Treatment Group B participants were posttested after seeing the slide/tape presentation and working through the concept lesson. Treatment Group C was posttested after seeing the slide/tape presentation only.

The pretest consisted of multiple-choice knowledge questions on discussion leadership, five point Likert-type scale attitude rating questions, and demographic questions. The posttest included the same knowledge and attitude questions as the pretest. It also included a form to rate technical aspects of the program and open-ended questions soliciting program strengths, limitations, and suggestions for improvement.

Developed by the investigator, the questionnaires were reviewed and revised by a measurement services specialist and by subject matter specialists in communications, group dynamics and adult education. The questionnaires were pilot tested by 40 Extension volunteer leaders in Washington County, Minnesota. In a test-retest, $\underline{r} = +.78$ was obtained on the knowledge section and $\underline{r} = +.73$ was obtained on the attitude section.

The instructor variable was controlled by having the same person conduct all training sessions. The meetings were monitored by the Hennepin County Extension Home Economist.

Data were collected from the instructor administered questionnaires. Information was key punched into I.B.M. cards and computer processed. Paired $\underline{t}$ tests, one way analysis of variance, multiple regression and Chi square were the major tests used to analyze the data.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study concern population studies, scope of study, possible investigator bias and measurement error.

A major limitation was the restriction of the evaluation to one county's subjects in one adult education organization. Also, no attempt was made to assess change in discussion leading skills following participation in the program. Observations and checklists of the leaders' behaviors at the local study groups would be more suitable strategies to assess changes in skill. Because this evaluator is also the program developer, an implicit conflict of interest may exist. To deal with any biases, suggestions were solicited from intra and extra organizational personnel to help plan, conduct, analyze and report this evaluation. Finally, the instrument used was designed specifically for this study and has not been tested extensively for its validity or reliability.

Organization of the Paper

This chapter has outlined the study. Chapter Two will present a review of relevant literature. Chapter Three elaborates on the study's design and procedure. Study findings are detailed in Chapter Four. The final chapter offers implications of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of this study was on evaluating the effectiveness of three program components that were designed to train volunteer leaders in discussion leadership. In order to review the relevant literature, three computer searches were undertaken employing the Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) and dissertation abstracts. The resultant review relates to three aspects of the problem: study groups and their effectiveness; training volunteers in peer teaching; and research on teaching adults.

Study Groups

Use in Adult Education

The study group has long been a center of attention in adult education, either on its own terms or as the major format which uses the process of group discussion. Holden (1976) differentiates the study discussion group from a general discussion group in that there is usually a prescribed curriculum which is sponsored by an organization.

One of the earliest proponents of study groups in this country was Benjamin Franklin. In 1772, he organized the Junto. The Junto was made up of twelve men who met every Friday to explore politics, natural philosophy and morals (Knowles, 1977). The Lyceum Movement consisting of local study groups began in 1826 to stimulate taxsupported public shcools and to improve its participants (Knowles, 1977). Great Books is a national ongoing volunteer group discussion program for the liberal education of adults (Davis, 1961). The Great Decisions Program is another national ongoing program which brings together groups of interested persons to discuss foreign policy issues (Holden, 1976). Between 1951 and 1960, The Fund for Adult Education invested substantially in the study group discussion group method, based on the consequent study of books and related materials (Holden, 1976, p. 193). Other ongoing discussion groups are League of Women Voter study groups, Federated Women Clubs and the Concern of the National study groups.

As already mentioned, the Cooperative Extension Service has used study groups, particularly to study improved methods of homemaking. These groups have been known by various names -- home demonstration clubs, Farm Women's Clubs, Homemaker Clubs, Home Bureaus, or Extension Units (Heywood, 1966, pp. 251-254).

Composition of Members

Several dimensions of non-credit study groups have been researched. Davis's 1961 work, Great Books and Small Groups represented one of the first attempts to research the program of reading and discussion in small groups led by non-professional students of the subject matter rather than by experts in it. His study and others by Burch and Kaplan (Holden, 1978, p. 193) found that reading-discussion groups attracted a particular kind of audience. Also, a number of national and state studies have shown that membership in organized Extension Homemaker groups has become increasingly heterogenous (Barber, 1975; Carr, 1978; Hammann, 1973; Markell, 1978; McCormick, 1978; Prawl, 1978; Ramsey, 1974,75; Redeker, 1974).

When the participants in lecture courses for credit were compared with those in non-credit discussion groups, the following differences were found. Those in the lectures were younger, more often single, more educated, and higher skilled occupationally. They also had less previous participation in adult education. The opposite circumstances were found for those in discussion groups (Hiemstra, 1976).

Study Group Effectiveness

While the nature of participants in study groups has been studied, the evaluation of the extent of learning in study groups has received limited attention. In an article, A Learning Community, Holden (1878) reports study discussion groups as one of the most useful methods for adults to learn civic education.

There has always been debate by Extension workers as to the relative effectiveness of the Extension Homemaker group as a method of teaching information. Research has shown that the methods of teaching used in Extension Homemaker clubs have been especially successful where the information presented was applicable to the solution of problems of families. Since much home economics subject matter is especially adapted to the demonstration method of teaching, a large part of home economics Extension education is presented via demonstration by leaders in Extension Homemaker groups.

Studies have been done on the effectiveness of teaching done by local leaders through method demonstrations. Results of these studies as reported by Meredith C. Wilson and Gladys Gallup (1955, p. 44) indicate that presenting home economics subject matter by the method demonstration:

> ...accounted for 47 percent of the practices adopted, in striking contrast to the 8 percent of agricultural practices associated with this method of teaching....In no field of home economics does the influence of the method demonstration and leader training meetings fall below 30 percent.

In evaluating the cost of influencing the adoption of Extension recommended practices through method demonstration and leader training meetings, Wilson and Gallup further report that:

> ...there is a wide difference in cost of influencing the adoption of practices relating to home economics and agriculture....In the case of home economics, the number of practices influenced per unit of cost is 36 percentage points above average, while in agriculture the number of practices changed is 22 percentage points below the average for all methods.

They point out that factors which may contribute to this are repeated teaching by local leaders without additional cost to Extension, that the teaching of homemaking skills is especially adapted to the demonstration method, and

> possibly an even more important factor in reducing the cost per home economics practice adopted...is the opportunity afforded by regularly scheduled meetings of local home demonstration clubs...without having to arrange for special meetings.

Extension research further indicates that general meetings of the lecture or panel discussion type account for an additional 12 percent of home economics practices adopted (Heywood, 1966).

Barber and Ramsey (1975) were interested in determining whether principles of nutrition, food safety, and food preservation were learned through method demonstrations presented by volunteer leaders during their training, whether these principles were learned by the homemaker group members during group sessions that volunteer leaders taught, and whether the information was retained by homemaker group members one month later. These tests showed consistent and statistically significant gains in learning by the leaders. Increments in learning of homemakers attending the group meetings were consistant with the leader's scores. The consistency of the results led the authors to believe that the Extension leader training structure results in significant learning and retention of principles.

A study with similar objectives was conducted with horticultural subject matter, but using lecture/group discussion as the teaching method. The findings indicated that leader training was an effective method of conducting horticultural educational programs (Seefeldt, 1976).

Published studies by the Cooperative Extension Service are positive on the effectiveness of the study group when they have used method demonstrations in teaching. One study, (Seefeldt, 1976) using lecture/group discussion, also reported positive results.

Volunteers as Peer Teachers

The literature on volunteerism is ever growing. This section of literature review is not intended to be a comprehensive look at volunteerism or training. Rather, only research conclusions and generalizations about training volunteers for peer teaching and discussion leadership will be presented.

General Notions About Training Adult Volunteers

There is nothing more frustrating to an individual than to be given responsibility for a job he is not prepared to fill. Kreitlow, Aiton, and Torrence (1960, p. 135) clearly make this point:

> One of the worst and most frequent tricks perpetrated on human society is to urge leadership on a willing victim

> without providing at the same time for pre-service and beginning assistance. Volunteers who are left holding a bag of responsibility without the benefit of counsel and support are a sad sight indeed. This practice accounts for the initial hesitancy and early drop out of many volunteer leaders.

Volunteers come to training for a variety of their own reasons, but primarily they want to learn how to carry out the assignments which they have assumed as volunteers (Naylor, 1976; Schindler-Rainman and Lippett, 1964; Wilson, 1979). Most important, says Naylor, is for adults to see the connection between what the training is about and what they understand they need to know.

Generalizations about volunteers and their implications for volunteer training outlined by Schindler-Rainman and Lippett (1964, p. 80-81) could facilitate this connection. Selected generalizations and their implications are:

> Volunteers participate in training events because they want to learn to do their volunteer jobs. Implication: The training must be practical and relevant to the learners and must be related to life as they know it.
>
> Volunteers bring with them a wide variation of experiences, knowledge, and skills. Implication: Training methods that build on and use the volunteer's experience, knowledge, and skills will produce the best and most relevant kind of learning.
>
> Often the training format and content have been developed over the years and have not been revised or retailored for the particular participants at a particular time. Implication: Each training event, if possible, should be planned by trainers and some potential participants in order to meet the current needs of a particular group.
>
> Many volunteers have been exposed to learning situations that were not helpful, relevant, or exciting. Implication: The learning activities should take place in an informal, experiential atmosphere.
>
> Volunteers have a number of important roles (as parents, workers, students, citizens) that compete for their time. Implication: Training should be planned to take into consideration the limited time available to most volunteers and to accept the legitimacy of their other loyalities.

These assumptions and their implications for training are consistent with general adult education theory and teaching strategies. Malcolm Knowles (1973) developed the concept of andragogy. Andragogy is a theory of teaching based on assumptions about adults as learners which include the adult self-concept, the role of experience, readiness to learn and orientation to learning. Andragogy represents a respect for the adults' (1) psychological need to be independent and self directed, (2) desire for immediate application, (3) problem orientation, and (4) previous experience. Pine and Horne (1969) write about similar principles and conditions for learning in adult education.

A point iterated by Naylor (1976, p. 108) warrants particular recognition in teaching volunteers to teach. A training event teaches volunteers in many ways, not all of which are planned or anticipated.

> Each event has a stated message, but it also carries a model function of much wider implication than is usually recognized. The manner of a trainer's approach to the group will be limited to the last gesture by some of the group members the next time they face a group of their own.

These illustrations point out the necessity for a well-planned and properly executed training program for lay leaders, if organizational and personal objectives are to be realized. To any person who serves in a lay-leadership capacity, Trent (1966) says the workers have a moral obligation to help that leader:

1. Develop a clear concept of the purposes and objectives of the organization
2. Develop an understanding of his function and role in

the educational program, and

3. Obtain the knowledge or skills necessary for carrying out his specific job.

Volunteers Trained in Peer Teaching

In 1961, the Delaware Cooperative Extension Service and the Fels Center for Group Dynamics carried out a study to apply testing procedures in the solution of Extension teaching problems, to develop insights into the complexity of group behavior and the problems and limitations of local leaders in teaching situations, and to inventory leadership practices in planning and carrying out the Extension Homemaker programs (Reinbold, 1961). They hypothesized that (1) group members would be motivated to change practices more readily if they discussed the application of subject matter to their own situation than they would without such discussion; (2) improved techniques of leader training such as the use of better visual aids and more thorough preparation of subject matter would result in improved teaching by leaders at the club level; (3) leaders would follow the same procedures for teaching at the club level that staff used when training leaders.

The following emerged from this study:

1. Small group discussion led to a better understanding of subject matter, especially if the discussion was focused upon problems and difficulties which might arise in attempting to implement recommended practices. Small group discussion, therefore, seemed to be an aid in the learning of subject matter.
2. Training local leaders in the methodology of teaching

helped them do a more competent job.

3. Providing a planning period during leader training meetings:
    a. Motivated leaders to spend considerable additional time in planning for their teaching.
    b. Provided emotional support for doing a good job.
4. The use of teaching devices, such as visual aids, check-lists and other devices designed to "involve" the learners, heightened participants' interest in subject matter and elicited their active participation.
5. Local leaders increased in confidence, skill and satisfaction when presenting home economics subject matter to their respective clubs.
6. As local leaders grew in confidence, they demonstrated a higher level of competency in teaching.
7. There seemed to be an inverse relationship between the amount of time club members consider appropriate for presentation of home economics subject matter and the degree of teaching skill and competence demonstrated by the local leader.

In a cooperative effort the Scovill Manufacturing Company and UAW local 1604 of Waterbury, Connecticut, sponsored a retirement education program for all employees over 55 years of age (Hunter, 1965). Thirteen volunteer persons were trained as discussion leaders to conduct the programs. The training program provided opportunities to practice leadership skills required to plan, organize, conduct and evaluate retirement education programs. In all instances, leaders acquired changes in the desired direction. In pretests, leaders expected to become better discussion leaders; posttests revealed that the training program improved their skills. Initially, four leaders felt adequate to conduct a discussion program, whereas eleven of the thirteen felt adequately prepared after taking part in the training. All but three mentioned the friendly or cooperative atmosphere which prevailed during the training project and the interest on the part of the instructors. More time was suggested more often than anything else to improve the training program.

The Samoan Demonstration program was an attempt to institute peer instruction in reaching disadvantaged Samoan immigrants to Hawaii (Douthit, 1974). The purpose was to teach basic education to 75 unemployed and underemployed adult Samoans. Before peer instruction was started, attendance had been a problem. Once the Samoan Demonstration program had been staffed with people who had community wide acceptance, enrolling students became a minor problem. This study concluded that the concept of using someone's peer to serve as his teacher has potential. The author noted, however, that students need to be sold on the worth of peer instruction.

Volunteers Trained in Discussion Leadership

In 1947, Anderson showed the necessity for a leader to understand the theory and philosophy of the discussion method and to be well trained in appropriate techniques. Five of the eight organizations he studied used the discussion as the only or the chief educational technique. The success of group discussion in the agencies

Anderson studied was proportional to the emphasis each placed on training leaders in using that method of teaching. Among the eight programs examined by Anderson, only one stressed a scientific approach to discussion, including the necessity of obtaining facts on which to base discussion.

Sometimes leaders were selected because of their local prestige rather than for their competence in group discussion leadership. Such persons tended to use their positions as a means of disseminating, rather than sharing, information or opinions, and of insuring that any group decision arrived at was consistent with the position supported by the state organization. On the other hand, frankness and freedom of expression exposed conflicts of opinion under good leadership and then tended to resolve them and achieve consensus. Such a process takes time, and Anderson showed that the less trained leader frequently failed to allow adequate time for issues to be explored or, where desired, for agreement to be reached.

In one program, local leaders were given training in public affairs institutes, often running three days. This public affairs discussion program in Wisconsin has been operating for years. The number of active groups in any one season has reached about 1,000. Anderson stated that most of the values claimed for the discussion method by adult educators can be demonstrated from the long continuing experience of this program. There has been no research, however, evaluating the program.

Dance (1966) reported on 100 returned Peace Corp volunteers' participation in seminars designed to assist them in their roles as small group discussion facilitators. Although the volunteers entered the seminars with high levels of "flexibility", "openmindedness", and "leadership ability", the seminar served to reinforce rather than alter these characteristics. The volunteers significantly increased their knowledge of group process. It was found that the seminar helped prepare volunteers for their role as facilitators of small group discussions. Volunteers' self-confidence concerning this training role was enhanced through seminar participation.

Brunner (1959) reviewed studies to support the conclusion that volunteer discussion leaders can be developed in adult education. In one, 80 groups of four persons each were used. Forty-four of these groups were exposed to eight hours of training in the use of discussion as an adult education tool for arriving at an understanding of, and consensus about, certain changes in organizational procedure. Role playing was one technique used. The other 36 groups were given no training except a half-hour lecture. All subjects in these groups were industrial personnel of first line or intermediate management status. At the end of the period, both trained and untrained groups were allowed a half-hour discussion during which the subjects played leadership roles requiring group decision.

The results showed that resistance to change was sharply reduced in the cases where the leaders had received the eight hours of training. The primary difference between the trained and untrained leaders' conference procedures was that while the latter refuted objections to change and thus actually engendered hostility, the trained leader was inclined to present the situation as a problem and to listen to and explore suggestions and criticisms emanating from the group. The differences were statistically significant at the .01 level (Maier, 1953).

Research on The Effectiveness of Selected Methods In Teaching Adults

The previous studies have spoken to the value of having a practice session and discussion as part of the training of volunteers. Naylor (1976) states two essential parts of job training are a chance to practice the skill that will be needed, and a chance to talk face-to-face with experienced people who like the job and find it interesting and gratifying. She suggests a guided tour or set of slides as possible substitutes for personal informal conversations with people experienced in using the skill. This suggestion was part of the rationale for including a syncronized slide/tape, a concept presentation and group discussion as parts of the "Discussion Leader Training Program". This section of the literature review will look at evaluations of the three instructional methods which comprise the "Discussion Leader Training Program" - the syncronized slide/tape, the concept lesson and group discussion.

Houle (1972) and Hiemstra (1976) state there has been considerable research on the use of various instructional methods including media with the adult learner. However, most research reports published between 1966 and 1971 were of a generally non-experimental nature, with only a small attempt to assess the instructional effectiveness of audio visual media, especially in the field of adult education (Campeau, 1974). Holzbauer and Florell's (1975) review confirmed that little research has been done in this area between 1971 and 1975.

Audio Visual Aids

Research to discover the utility of graphic and pictorial techniques was undertaken during the 1920's. These studies found that various forms of pictorial and graphic presentation of data were more easily comprehended and retained than when such data were presented by narration or simple numbers (Craxton & Stryker, 1927; Eels, 1926; Van Huhm, 1927; Washburne, 1927). Systematic research on the effectiveness of pictorial educational devices (films and slides) with adults was carried out during World War II by Hovland et al. (1953) in conjunction with imparting information to Army trainees about the background which led to the war. These studies established the fact that adults could glean and retain information from films. Vernon (Brunner, 1959, p.153) made a comprehensive review of research in the field in 1952 and pointed out conditions under which graphic and pictorial aids were effective. One such generalization is that pictorial presentation is usually understood better when supplemented with verbal explanation.

Bodenhamer (1964) tested 715 adults who were voluntarily attending educational meetings. He found that adult audiences who were presented an informative speech supplemented with visual aids learned significantly more, as measured by immediate recall, than did adult audiences presented the same informative speech without visual aids.

In "A Comparative Analysis of Four Individualized Instructional Delivery Systems With Adult Learners", the only conclusion reached by Holzbauer and Forell (1975) was that the audio assisted method (tape only) was shown to be significantly inferior to three other methods: slide/tape, reading printed material and programmed instruction. Miller (1945) warns that the effectiveness of audio visual aids as a stimulus for discussion is closely related to the skill of the leader in using them so as to give the discussion a focus.

Studies seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of learning by slide/tape presentations obtained mixed results. Amelon (1969) divided college level classes in bench metal work and welding into two groups. Six selected units of instruction were taught by conventional group demonstration methods to control groups. The same units were taught by self instructional slides and audio tapes to individuals in the experimental group. Pretest and posttest scores for two subject matter units were significantly higher for the control group. The experimental group scored significantly higher in one unit. For the remaining three units, there was no significant difference between the two groups.

Kalmas (1966) also found slide/tape instruction when used alone to be less effective than conventional teaching methods and slide/tape auto-instruction accompanied by laboratory sessions. The experimentor concluded that a minimum of teacher-student interaction greatly increases the effectiveness of slide/tape instruction as a delivery system.

A study by Young (1969) did not deal with adults or post-secondary education, but is relevant to this review because of its comparison of the use of slide tape instruction with a conventional printed brochure. Eleventh grade boys in six central Missouri public schools were presented information regarding industrial arts teaching as a career choice. Pretest and posttest scores indicated that there was no significant difference in learning between the two methods. Posttest measures were secured thirty days after the presentation.

McVey (1970) also found inconclusive results on the effectiveness of auto-instructional slide tapes in teaching a high school level vocational agriculture courses. The autotutorial system was not significantly more effective than the control method in teaching animal health, commercial fertilizer and small gas engines. The autotutorial system was found to be significantly more effective with students in a class on farm credit.

In summary, studies examining the use of visual aids to supplement an oral presentation found positive results. Slide tape presentations used to supplement an oral presentation were likewise positive. A generalization about the effectiveness of the slide tape as an autotutorial system cannot be made here due to conflicting research findings. It should be noted that in such cases, the slide tape is used without a discussion leader or teacher present.

Concept Learning

Bruner, Goodnow and Austin (1967) studied the process by which humans form concepts of categories which enable them to describe similarities and relationships among things in the environment. Based on their work, Bruce Joyce and Marsha Weil (1972, p. 121) developed a model for teaching concept attainment. Their Concept Attainment Model consists of four phases summarized as follows:

Phase One - Use concept attainment exercises. Present data -- indicate positive and negative exemplars. Students speculate about the concept, comparing and contrasting their hypotheses. Additional exemplars may be present until concept is identified.

Phase Two - Analyze strategies. Students analyze their strategies for attaining concepts in Phase One.

Phase Three - Analyze concepts from unorganized data. Students analyze given concepts for their attributes from unorganized data; material is presented, and identification of exemplars is done by the students. Analysis of the process.

Phase Four - Practice concept formation. Students teach concepts to others and defend them. Analysis of process.

David Ausubel's theory of Meaningful Verbal Learning (1963, p. 59) contains another strategy which people use to learn concepts. In his model, often called the Advance Organizer Model:

> the most general and inclusive ideas of the discipline are presented first and then are progressively differentiated in terms of detail and specificity.

Another group has developed a strategy for teaching concepts based on their studies (Morrill & Tennyson, 1971, 1977; Tennyson, 1973; Tennyson, Wooley & Morrill, 1972; Young, 1972; Tennyson, Steve & Boutwell, 1975). Subjects of these studies were junior high and undergraduate students. While the authors admit there is more work to be done, from this research, they have developed specific procedures which they have tested. These procedures include:

1. present a definition of the concept
2. provide a presentation of a set of matched examples/non-examples in which subsequent examples are divergent from the preceding examples and which range in difficulty from easy to difficult
3. provide attribute isolation help for each example and non-example in the presentation
4. provide a practice presentation of newly encountered examples and non-examples arranged in random sequence accompanied by feedback, and
5. test for correct classification by means of a test consisting of a sufficient number and variety of randomly sequenced newly encountered classification behaviors of instances of the concept being taught.

Based on their studies, Merrill and Tennyson (1977, p. ix) say the procedure provides for better instruction of concepts than is typically seen in classroom or mediated instruction.

Multimedia Methods

Houle, in The Uncommon School (1966) begins to make the case for multimedia instruction by saying: "Any effort to build a system of educational process on the work of a specific tool, method of practice or institution is limited."

Ralph Tyler (1960) defines learning experiences as the interaction between the learner and the external conditions in the environment to which he can react. He says that learning takes place through the active behavior of the learner: it is what the learner does that he learns, not what the teacher does. Tyler further states that the teacher provides an educational experience by structuring the situation so as to stimulate the desired type of reaction.

Edgar Dale (1969) has chosen to classify learning experiences by:

1. Those that require the student to participate, versus those experiences where the student is the observer.
2. Those experiences where the student is responsible for the outcome of the experience, versus those where the the student is not responsible for the outcome.
3. From the least to the most abstract.

Dale has incorporated these three classifications into one figure which he calls "The Cone Of Experience". According to the definition of learning experience given by Tyler (1950) it is possible to assume that one should select a learning experience which involves concrete experience and in which the learner has responsibility for the outcome and yet not sacrifice effectiveness, efficiency, or economy. The major value of using a multimedia approach is that it is less abstract, invites more student participation, and can involve student resonsibility for his or her own learning than when each medium is used separately.

The five stages of the adoption process are: (a) awareness; (b) interest; (c) evaluation; (d) trial; and (e) adoption (Fessler, 1958). Research shows that mass media ranked higher than other sources in creating initial awareness and interest in new practices. However, the influence of neighbors and friends was considered most effective in motivating them to evaluate and to try the recommended practices. (Subcommittee for The Study of Diffusion of Farm Practices, 1961).

Beal, Bohlen, and Raudabaugh (1962) describe several specific techniques that might be considered to bring information and understanding to a group. The various techniques to be used in a group situation will depend on several factors which may be specific for the individual group. Many of the most successful group methods according to these authors are achieved by combining techniques.

Effectiveness of Group Discussion

Group discussion has almost universally been accepted as an effective teaching technique in adult education. The extensive literature on this subject speaks of its importance from the adult education viewpoint. Osinski's "Toward Gog and Magog or? A Critical Review of the Literature of Adult Group Discussion" (1972) is one review and analysis of the literature.

Much of the research concerned with the utility of discussion has revolved around a comparison between it and the use of the lecture as a means not only for imparting information, but also for changing attitudes, opinions and practices.

Don Fessler (1958, p. 4) points out that as people move along the five stages from awareness of a particular practice toward decision making concerning adoption of the practice "...they need to be more and more involved in the meeting. They need to be made to think". This, he says, can be done most effectively by gaining their participation in the program. The purpose of discussion is to start the person along the process of gaining interest in the subject and of evaluating it in terms of his/her own situation.

One of the most frequently cited studies demonstrating the effectiveness of discussion as a teaching device is one directed by Kurt Lewin (Brunner, 1959, p. 164). During Word War I, Lewin was exploring how to change food habits in the direction of less popular, more easily obtainable and nutritious foods. He used groups of women from high, medium, and low income levels. Half of each of these economic status groups were given a half-hour lecture by a nutritionist who then answered questions for 15 minutes. The lectures were reported as well done.

Charts were employed, mimeographed recipes were distributed and hints on methods of preparation were given. For the other half of these groups of women, discussion was employed, also for 45 minutes. The nutritionist was present as a resource person who answered technical questions. The meeting was conducted by a skilled discussion leader under whose guidance the members of the discussion groups came to regard the matter being discussed as important to them; began taking over responsibility for the flow of discussion; and, after the objections to and difficulties in using the recommended foods had been aired, made a decision. The same recipes were given to both discussion and lecture groups, but only after interest had obviously been aroused. Although the proportions varied, about ten times as many women from the discussion groups as from the lecture groups tried these foods.

A result comparable to Lewin's was secured in the health education field. Seventy-seven groups of women, 899 in all, were instructed with respect to the need for medical examinations to detect cancer and the technique for self-examination of the breasts every month. The groups were comparable to the total population with respect to marital status, occupation and education, but not in age. Lectures were used with 33 groups, "discussion-decision" with 44. The latter were markedly superior in adopting the procedures advocated (Bond, 1955).

A well-designed study from industry (Brunner, 1959, p. 166) sought to repeat Lewin's research on eating habits under more carefully controlled conditions both with respect to the information given and in the measurement of resulting behavior changes. Answers were sought to two questions: (1) Is learning enough to lead to change in group behavior? (2) Is group decision through discussion more effective than formal lectures in changing behavior?

The subjects were 29 factory foremen. The problem was to teach them to rate their 395 workers solely according to each worker's merit, avoiding any "halo effect" caused by his higher or lower job rank. All the subjects were experienced in ratings. For the purposes of the experiment, they were randomly divided into three groups with 9, 9, and 11 men respectively. Group A was used as the control. Group B used discussion for one and one-half hours, seated around a table. The leader introduced the problem but did not participate in the discussion. The objective was to reach a consensus that would register in action. Group C had a lecture on the techniques and theory of rating. Previous errors were pointed out, graphs and figures were used. There was a question and answer period.

The pretest ratings by the members of all three groups had shown significant biases in their ratings of workers holding high and low job ranks. Posttest ratings can be summarized as follows:

Group A - Control - No change

Group C - Lecture - No significant differences, though the the ratings for workers of high and low classifications were in the direction advocated in the lecture.

Group B - Discussion - Significant change. The mean ratings of workers of high and low job ranks were equal (Levine & Butler, 1952).

The armed services made considerable use of discussion in helping millions of men engaged in World War II understand why the United States was a major participant in that conflict. Objective observers have reported that the effort resulted in higher morale (Auer, 1946; Schreiker, 1949).

Robinson (1941) is one of the investigators who has measured shifts in attitudes or opinions on social problems using 20 groups and applying Thurstone Attitude Scales before and after discussion. In comparison with control groups, all discussion groups showed significant changes in attitude among the college student subjects.

While the studies examined thus far were favorable to the use of discussion in adult education, some lecture versus discussion comparisons are not favorable to discussion, as in a United States Air

Force Primary Pilot Training School study among three equated groups. On the basis of precourse and postcourse achievement and an Air Force standardized final examination, the lecture technique proved slightly superior to discussion and to lecture-discussion. This superiority, however, was slight, reaching the .05 level of confidence only when lecture and lecture-discussion methods were compared. The author indicates that all men involved were above average in intelligence and perhaps responded better to the lecture technique because of this. Furthermore, the instructor was more familiar with lecturing than with leading discussions. The military environment being characteristically authoritarian may have influenced the result. On the basis of oral and written critique, the lecture-discussion method gave the greatest amount of satisfaction to the students (Palmer, 1958).

Several other studies showed better learning results from the lecture method. Bloom concluded in 1953 that more actual thinking takes place under the lecture method than in discussions.

Brunner (1959, p.168) in his Overview of Adult Education Research summarized by saying, "The contradictory nature of the results of these studies suggests that the explanations may be not in the techniques and methods employed, but in other factors, such as the educational status and cultural backgrounds of participants, the content of the subject matter, and the facility of the leader in handling the technique".

As a result of his study of the use of discussion by the agencies in Wisconsin, Anderson (1947, p. 127-30) formulated some criteria by which to judge its usefulness and evaluate its outcomes in any given situation. His formulation is briefly summarized below in terms of what should characterize a successful discussion experience.

> In terms of theory, discussion should be a process of sharing opinions and information about a mutual problem, purposefully proceeding in democratic fashion with full opportunity for the expression of all points of view and participation by all or most members of the group. Recognizable values should emerge from this process, though no unreasonable demands should be made on discussion as a sole method of adult education, to be used under any and all circumstances without recourse to other methods where called for. The group discussion leader should understand his function, be neutral, and make provision for a proper balance of fact and opinion and a testing of opinions by known facts.
>
> In terms of the sociology of groups, the discussion group should conform to the characteristics and societal process of groups and contribute to the primary function of furthering both personality development and the welfare of the organization or the community of people involved. The communication process within the group should contribute to the effective use of discussion techniques, maintain a proper balance between individualization and socialization in its use, and stress the positive aspects both of cooperation and conflict in the interaction of group members.

Summary

Research and theory development relative to study groups, adult peer teaching and selected instructional methods have been reviewed as background for this study. The following summary statments can be made:

1. Study groups have historically been a part of United States adult education. Membership characteristics have primarily been the focus of investigations of study groups. While evaluations on the effectiveness of study groups in fostering adult learning have been positive, the reported studies within the Agriculture Extension Service have been limited primarily to method demonstration technique of group instruction.

2. Adult volunteers trained as peer teachers usually facilitate learning of study groups. It is clear from the literature that they can also be developed through training and given the necessary role expectations. Research on adult peer teaching is limited and what is available has usually been descriptive rather than empirical.
3. While learning theorists and researchers espouse the use of audio visual aids, concept lessons and group discussion as teaching devices, they do not see any one as superior in optimizing the learning process. Successful group instruction has often been achieved by combining techniques.
4. Five research studies showed that discussion is effective in imparting information and in changing attitudes, opinions and practices. Several lecture versus discussion comparisons were not favorable to discussion. Educational status of the participant, content of the subject matter and facility of the leader may be factors in explaining the contradictory findings. It should be noted that in the studies on discussion there is a lack of control of the objectives for the discussions.
5. Finally, this review revealed a gap in the literature. There is a lack of formal evaluation of training study group volunteers in discussion leadership.

CHAPTER THREE

STUDY DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of evaluating the "Discussion Leader Training Program" is to determine the effectiveness of its use in training Extension Homemaker Volunteers as discussion leaders. In this chapter, the design and procedure employed in testing its effectiveness and in gathering other relevant data will be described. This will include a description of the "Discussion Leader Training Program", the instrument used to obtain data, the sample, and the procedures for collecting and analyzing the data.

Description of "Discussion Leader Training Program"

The purpose of this "Discussion Leader Training Program" is two-fold:

- to introduce the concept of discussion leader to study group members who are being trained as leaders for a particular study topic.
- to aid these leader-teachers in developing skill as a discussion leader.

As proposed, this program would constitute one-half, approximately 60 minutes, of the two hour leader training meeting. It would be used following the lesson's subject matter presentation.

Consisting of 3 components, the "Discussion Leader Training Program" includes a slide/tape presentation, a concept lesson and group discussion. This program was developed by the investigator.

The slide/tape presentation was written and produced with the consultative help of two other extension county agents with home economics responsibility, a district supervisor and an (adult) educator. Assistance was also provided by audio visual technicians and an artist. Many resources on group discussion were used in conceptualizing the slide/tape presentation; of particular assistance was the pamphlet "For Leaders of Small Group Discussion" (Barkheim, Jenson, Qualey & Semmler, 1975). The concept lesson was developed as the investigator's project in the University of Minnesota Curriculum and Instructional Systems class "Systems Approach to Design of Instruction". A technical report is available on its development (Sandmann, 1979). The group discussion component was patterned on the findings of the 1961 Delaware Extension Service Homemaker Study (Reinhold, 1961).

Activities And Objectives of Program

COMPONENT I

Slide/tape presentation - "You're the Guiding Link, Learning Link II"

content The slide/tape cassette presentation, written as an experienced discussion leader advising a novice, introduces the concept of discussion facilitator or "guiding link". It covers discussion procedures -- the "how-to's" and selected discussion problems -- the "what if's". (See Appendix A).

Although the twelve minute slide/tape presentation has the general goals listed above, its specific objectives are to develop understanding of the terminology and to create interest in the discussion facilitator's role and task.

COMPONENT II

Programmed Instruction - "Concept Lesson: Discussion Facilitator"

content The lesson defines the attributes of the "discussion facilitator" concept and provides experiences to help understand the concept. (See Appendix B).

The concept lesson also contributes toward general goals. Used following the slide/tape presentation, it is designed to reinforce the content and build upon a learner awareness/interest level to develop comprehension of the concept.

COMPONENT III

Small Group Work Sessions - 3 Parts

A. Leaders are placed in groups of four to discuss some general questions or problems involved in teaching the lesson to their members. Four suggested questions are given to each small group to discuss. (See Appendix C). Each group of four will select one person to report to the entire group on what they discussed and decisions made. These small group reports are not discussed in the larger group.

B. Practice techniques

These same groups of four people practice any one of the skills needed for discussing the study topic. Groups select one or more skills from a prepared list for members to practice. This segment would be optional pending time available.

C. Lesson planning

At this point, the groups of four are disbanded, and leaders from the same Homemaker group meet together. Each group is asked to prepare a specific lesson plan for teaching the topic to their study group members.

The purpose of Component III is for the learner to apply to knowledge gained through the prior components. This ability is to be acquired through planning the lesson for their local group meeting and practicing specific discussion leading techniques.

Adaptations Made In The "Discussion Leader Training Program"

When the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was actually used in this study, adaptations were made from the original proposal of activities. Due to the time restriction imposed by pre and post-testing, the group discussion was altered for all treatment groups. Instead of small group work and practice sessions as originally proposed, one large group discussion was held. However, leaders from the same study group did plan together for their local meeting as originally conceived.

Purpose of the Study

To determine the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program", four questions were investigated in this evaluation:

1. Did the leaders increase knowledge scores and attitude ratings after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program"?
2. Which of the three components of the "Discussion Leader

Training Program" was associated with the greatest increase in knowledge and attitude?

3. Did the program work better for different learners -- in terms of amount of experience as a leader, amount of experience as a discussion leader, age and level of educational attainment?
4. How did the leaders rate the "Discussion Leader Training Program" in terms of technical quality and helpfulness?

The information needed to answer these questions included:

1. Subjects' entry and exit knowledge of and attitude toward the role of discussion facilitator.
2. Social characteristics of the learners
   a. Extension Leader teaching experience
   b. Discussion leader experience
   c. Age
   d. Years of school completed
3. Volunteer's reactions to the discussion program.

Study Design

A quasi-experimental design using non-equivalent treatment groups (Campbell & Stanley, 1963) was this study's design. Three treatment groups were devised so all leaders could receive the complete training program in order to execute their discussion leader role and to be in accord with the rights of human subjects in research. The three treatment groups were also used to ascertain which of the components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was associated with the greatest increase in subjects; knowledge and attitude. All participants were pretested before participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program". Pretest scores were to serve as the comparison base. All leaders received the complete program, but posttesting was done at different times as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Study Treatment Schedule

	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4B	Site 4C	Site 5
	Treatment "A"		Treatment "B"		Treatment "C"	
	N=67		N-62		N=63	
pretest	X	X	X	X	X	X
slide/tape presentation	X	X	X	X	X	X
posttest					X	X
concept lesson	X	X	X	X	X	X
posttest			X	X		
group discussion	X	X	X	X	X	X
posttest	X	X				

Treatment Group A was post-tested after the complete treatment -- seeing the slide/tape presentation, working through the concept lesson and participating in group discussion. Treatment Group B participants were posttested after seeing the slide/tape presentation and working through the concept lesson. Treatment Group C participants were post-tested after seeing the slide/tape presentation only.

The designation of a particular treatment group with a training site was done arbitrarily. Sites 1 and 2 composed Treatment Group A, sites 3 and 4 made up Treatment Group B and site 4 and 5 constituted Treatment Group C. In an attempt to get equal numbers in each treatment group, site 4 participants were split. Half the room was posttested after working on the concept lesson (4b), the other half was posttested prior to working through the concept lesson (4c). Taking the posttest and working through the concept lesson were both quiet (reading/paper-pencil type) activities, so they could be done simultaneously and the different testing schedule was accomplished unobtrusively.

The instructor variable was controlled by having the same person, the evaluator, conduct all training sessions. The training meetings were monitored by the Hennepin County Extension Agent with home economics responsibility.

Instrument Used

An instrument was developed by the investigator to obtain the information for this study. The pretest consisted of multiple choice knowledge questions on discussion leadership, five point Likert-type scale attitude rating questions, and demographic questions.

The knowledge questions and alternatives were derived from a 100 question pool when the concept lesson was developed.

When planning and leading a discussion, oftentime there is more than one appropriate response to a situation. This being the case, the pre and posttest multiple choice knowledge questions had more than one correct response. Alternatives to each question were scored as true/false items according to the following procedure:

- if respondents checked an appropriate response, they were awarded one point,

- if respondents failed to check an appropriate response, they received a zero,
- if respondents left an inappropriate alternative blank, they were awarded one point, and
- if respondents checked an inappropriate response, they received a zero.

A respondent's score per question (pre and posttest question 1-8) was the summation of scores to each alternative.

The Likert-type questions were used to assess attitudes toward the role of discussion leader, perceived competence in the subject matter, and perceived confidence in discussion leadership ability. In Likert-type questions, the algebraic summation of all the scores of the individual's responses to all the separate items gives a total score. This is then interpreted as representing his/her position on a scale of favorable/unfavorable attitude toward a subject (Selletz, Jorhoba, Deutsch, Cook, 1962).

The portion of the instrument seeking demographic characteristics of the members was modeled after the 1973 statewide Homemaker Study (Ramsey, 1975).

The posttest included the same knowledge and attitude questions and scoring as the pretest. It also included a form to rate technical aspects and helpfulness of the programs and three open-ended questions soliciting program strengths, limitations and suggestions for improvement. Questionnaires with limited numbers of open-ended items are less difficult to tabulate and have higher response rates than those with primarily open-ended items (Skager & Weinberg, 1971).

The pre and posttest drafts were reviewed and revised by a measurement specialist and by subject matter specialists in communication, group dynamics and adult education. Forty Extension volunteer leaders in Washington County, Minnesota, were administered the pretest on two separate occasions two weeks apart. On the test-retest, r = +.78 was obtained on the knowledge section and r = +.73 was obtained on the attitude section. The questionnaires were again revised to eliminate ambiguous and obvious questions. Pre and posttests are included as Appendix D and E.

Description of Sample

The information source for this evaluation was volunteer leader teachers who attended the training program. Those participants or study subjects were 207 Hennepin County, Minnesota, Extension homemakers who received training as discussion leaders for that county's 1979 November Extension Homemaker study topic "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss in Your Life". This particular study topic was chosen to test the "Discussion Leader Training Program" because of its newness in Minnesota, as well as its applicability to any county program. Hennepin County Extension homemakers are primarily suburban, but also include rural and urban women. The leaders had volunteered at the beginning of the study year (September) to teach this topic without the knowledge that this program would be part of an evaluation project. Volunteers were free to attend one of five training sites, scattered geographically throughout the county, and were not randomly assigned to treatment groups.

Approval and endorsement for the study was received by state and county Extension administration. A methodological protocol was submitted and approved by the Committee on Use of Human Subjects in Research. (See Appendix F).

Data Collection

Five leader training sessions were held. The schedule for each 2-hour complete training session was:

60 minutes for subject matter training and discussion on "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss In Your Life".

60 minutes for discussion leader training

8 minutes pretest

12 minutes Component I - slide/tape presentation

10 minutes Component II - concept lesson

10 minutes Component III - group discussion on role of discussion facilitator

10 minutes posttest -- sequence depending on treatment group.

The instrument was group administered according to the schedule by the investigator. Leaders were advised that taking the pre and posttest was voluntary. The goal was to get 60 usable pre and posttests from each treatment group. One hundred ninety-two (93%) useable pre and posttests were secured:

67 from treatment group A

62 from treatment group B

63 from treatment group C.

Procedures for Analyzing Data

Following the collection of data, the information was processed for statistical treatment. Questionnaires were coded by the evaluator after each leader-training meeting. Responses were key punched onto IBM cards directly from the questionnaires, thus eliminating the step of transferring data to coding sheets and thereby minimizing error (Phillips, 1976).

Data computation and statistical analysis were done by Minnesota Analysis and Planning System (MAPS) of the Agricultural Extension Service. Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were calculated for each item in the pre and posttests.

Paired t tests were used to determine if there were improvements between the pre and posttests. To discover if the improvement depended on treatment group, a one-way ANOVA was used on the individual improvement scores. Multiple regression was used to explore the relationship between individual improvement and several background variables, including age, educational attainment, times being a leader teacher and times leading group discussion. Independence of group and background variables was tested using the Chi square statistic.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Previously presented in this paper have been the background and purpose of this study, the discussion of pertinent literature and an explanation of the research design. This chapter will describe the sample and present and interpret the data of the study. The study subjects will be compared in some ways with the subjects of three previous Minnesota studies of volunteer leaders.

Characteristics of the Sample

Age

The sample consisted of 192 women ranging in age from "25 or under" to "over 65", with the largest percentage of the sample (33%) falling in the 36-45 year category. The age composition of the sample is shown in Table 1.

An extensive Minnesota state-wide study of Extension Homemaker member characteristics was conducted in 1973. (Ramsey, 1975). A sample of 1,235 members was scientifically drawn, with a least one group per county included in the study. Membership characteristics were also looked at in a 1975 Ramsey County, Minnesota, Homemaker study (Barber, 1975), and a 1978 East Central District Homemaker Study (Markell, 1978). Geographically, East Central District includes Hennepin County and ten neighboring counties. A comparison of this study's age data with these three Minnesota studies is illustrated in Figure 2.

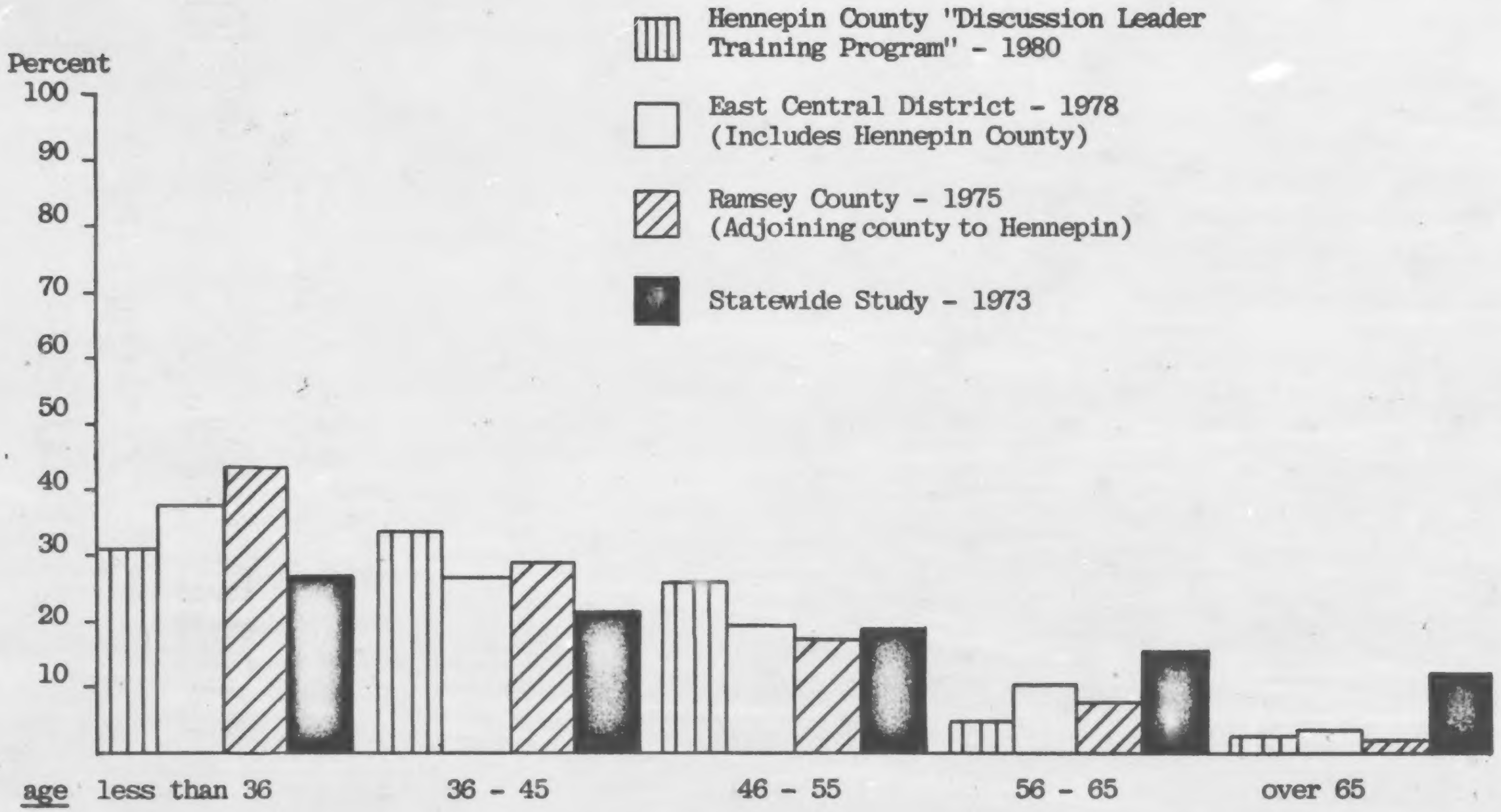

Figure 2. A four-study comparison of ages of Extension Homemakers

TABLE 1

Age Groups of "Discussion Leader Training Program" Participants

Age Groupings	Number	Percent
25 years or under	3	1.6
26 - 35 years	57	29.7
36 - 45 years	64	33.3
46 - 55 years	50	26.0
56 - 65 years	10	5.2
over 65 years	6	3.1
no response	2	1.0
Totals	192	100.0

Thirty percent of this study sample were under 36 years of age. This compares with 28.9% and 38.7 % respectively for the state, county and district studies. About 73 percent in this study were under 46 years of age, compared to 50.7 percent state study, and to 72.8 percent in the county and district studies. Only 3.1 percent of this sample fell in the "over 65" category, while 13.5 percent did so in the state study. The number was similar to the district study (3.3 percent) and was slightly higher than the county study.

The findings of this study concur with the inferences made by Hamann (1973), Barber (1975) and Markell (1978):

a) The largest group of Extension Homemakers are in age groups concerned with tasks of early adulthood and middle age.

b) Membership in more urban - suburban counties of Minnesota is more skewed toward young adults than is membership in Extension Homemakers statewide.

It could be argued that the population of this study was slightly older than the county and district samples due to the nature of the study topic: "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss In Your Life". The audience for this leader training lesson may be self-selected because as adults mature, they are coping with increasing changes and losses in their lives.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment of volunteer leaders in this study was higher than in the other studies of Minnesota Extension homemaker members. Nearly 97 percent were high school graduates. That compares with 75 percent for the state study, 95 percent for the county study, and 92 percent for the district study. Similar differences between the four studies exist for post high school graduation category, as shown in Table 2. Table shows the breakdown of educational attainment of this study's sample:

Table 2

Comparison of Educational Attainment of Extension Homemakers With Other Studies

Level of School Completed	"Discussion Leader Training Program" study 1980	District (1978)	County (1975)	State (1973)
Less than high school diploma	3.1%	8.2%	5.4%	25.5%
High School diploma (only)	37.5%	48.4%	46.0%	42.8%
More than High School diploma	55.2%	43.4%	48.4%	31.7%

Table 3

Education Attainment of "Discussion Leader Training Program" Participants

Level of School Completed	Number	Percent
Less than Eight Grades	0	0
Eight - Eleven Grades	6	3.1
High School Graduate	72	37.5
Attended Post Secondary Vocational School or College	62	32.3
College Graduate	30	15.6
Graduate Study	20	10.4
No Response	2	1.0
	N = 192	100.0

Volunteer Teaching Patterns

The Extension Homemaker program utilizes a system of volunteer leadership for its teaching. In most Homemaker groups with an average size of 12-15 members, each person has an annual opportunity to serve as lesson leader. Respondents were asked how many times they had served as a lesson leader teacher for an Extension Homemaker meeting. The results are shown in Table 4. Eighteen percent had not previously been leaders. Over 80 percent had served as a volunteer teacher at least once before attending this leader training meeting.

To ascertain the extent of the program participants' experiences in discussion leadership, respondents were asked the number of times they had led group discussions. This experience in discussion leadership was not limited to Extension Homemaker groups, but could include church activities, P.T.A. or other study groups. Experience in discussion leadership was diverse. Twelve percent of those attending the study's leader training had never led a group discussion. Nearly 40 percent recalled leading one to five discussions. Over 20 percent had led 21 or more discussions. Table 5 reports these results.

Table 4

Number of Times Served As A Lesson Leader

Number of Times Served	Number	Percent
0	35	18.2
1-3	77	40.1
4 or more	78	40.6
No Response	2	1.0
Totals	192	100.0

Table 5

Number of Times Served As A Discussion Leader

Number of Times Served	Number	Percent
0	23	12.0
1-5	76	39.6
6-10	30	15.6
11-20	21	10.9
21 or more	40	20.8
No Response	2	1.0
Totals	192	100.0

In summary, the "typical" participant was female, 36-45 years of age, a high school graduate, having some post-secondary education, previously served as a lesson leader and previously led a discussion group.

Improvement in Knowledge and Attitude

Did leaders increase their knowledge scores and attitude ratings after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program"?

Knowledge Gain

Figure 3 presents the frequency distribution of total scores based on the eight knowledge test items for the total sample on pre and posttests. The maximum score that could be obtained was 38. These questions related to knowledge of discussion leader roles and comprehension of discussion planning and leading skills.

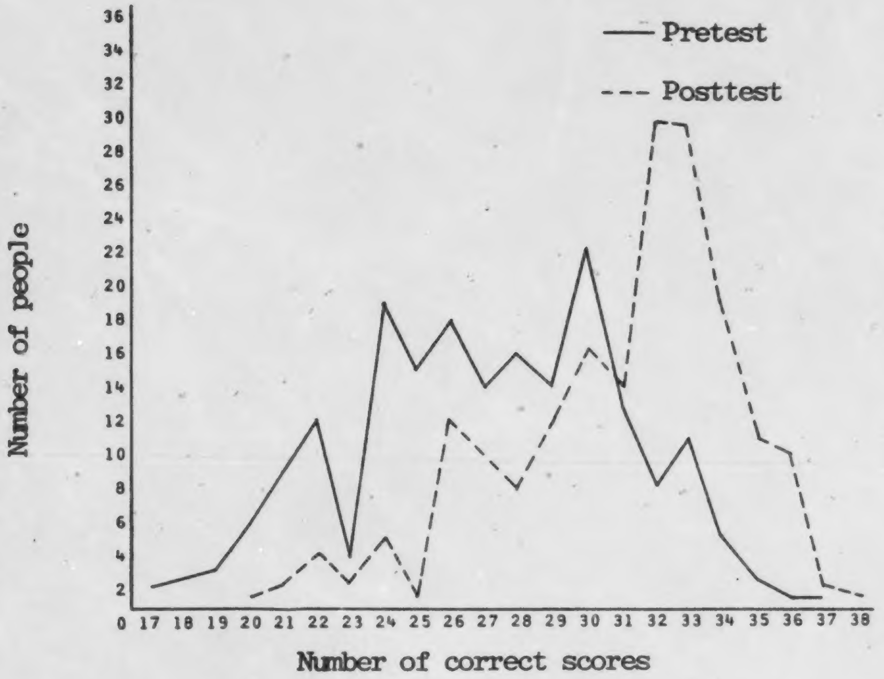

Figure 3. Frequency distribution of knowledge scores on pretests and posttests

Mean, range, standard deviation, standard error, skewness and kurtosis for pre and posttests on total knowledge scores are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Statistics For Total Knowledge Score

	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	26.98	30.755
Range	17-37	20-38
Standard Deviation	4.05	3.66
Standard Error	.292	.264
Skewness	- .068	- .702
Kurtosis	- .515	.039

Note Maximum Score = 38 N = 192

The t test for matched groups was used to test the significance between the total knowledge pretest and posttest score means. The t test for matched groups, or paired t test, was used since each subject's posttest score was matched with her own pretest score. The .05 level of probability was used in determining the significance of the test statistics obtained. The probability of the t statistics at .001 level is significant as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

t Test on Means of Pretest and Posttest Total Knowledge Scores

Mean Difference	- 3.77
Standard Deviation	3.136
Standard Error	.226
t value	- 16.66
Degrees of Freedom	191
2 - Tail Probability	.000

Overall, there was significant improvement from pre to posttest for the total sample in knowledge.

Attitude Improvement

The frequency distribution of scores from ten Likert-type attitude scales for the total sample on both pre and posttests is presented in Figure 4. These questions related to attitude toward role of discussion leaders and toward planning and facilitating a group discussion on the topic "Coping With Change, Crisis, and Loss In Your Life". The possible alternatives were assigned numbers: strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, and strongly agree - 5. Each person's score was based on a summation of their responses to all ten items. The maximum score was 50. The more confident and positive the attitude rating, the higher the score.

The mean, range, standard deviation, standard error, skewness and kurtosis for pre and posttest total attitude ratings are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

Statistics For Total Attitude Score

	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	35.47	37.90
Range	0 - 50	0 - 50
Standard deviation	6.402	6.117
Standard Error	.462	.441
Skewness	- 1.581	- 2.256
Kurtosis	6.625	13.074

Note: Maximum Score of 50 N = 192

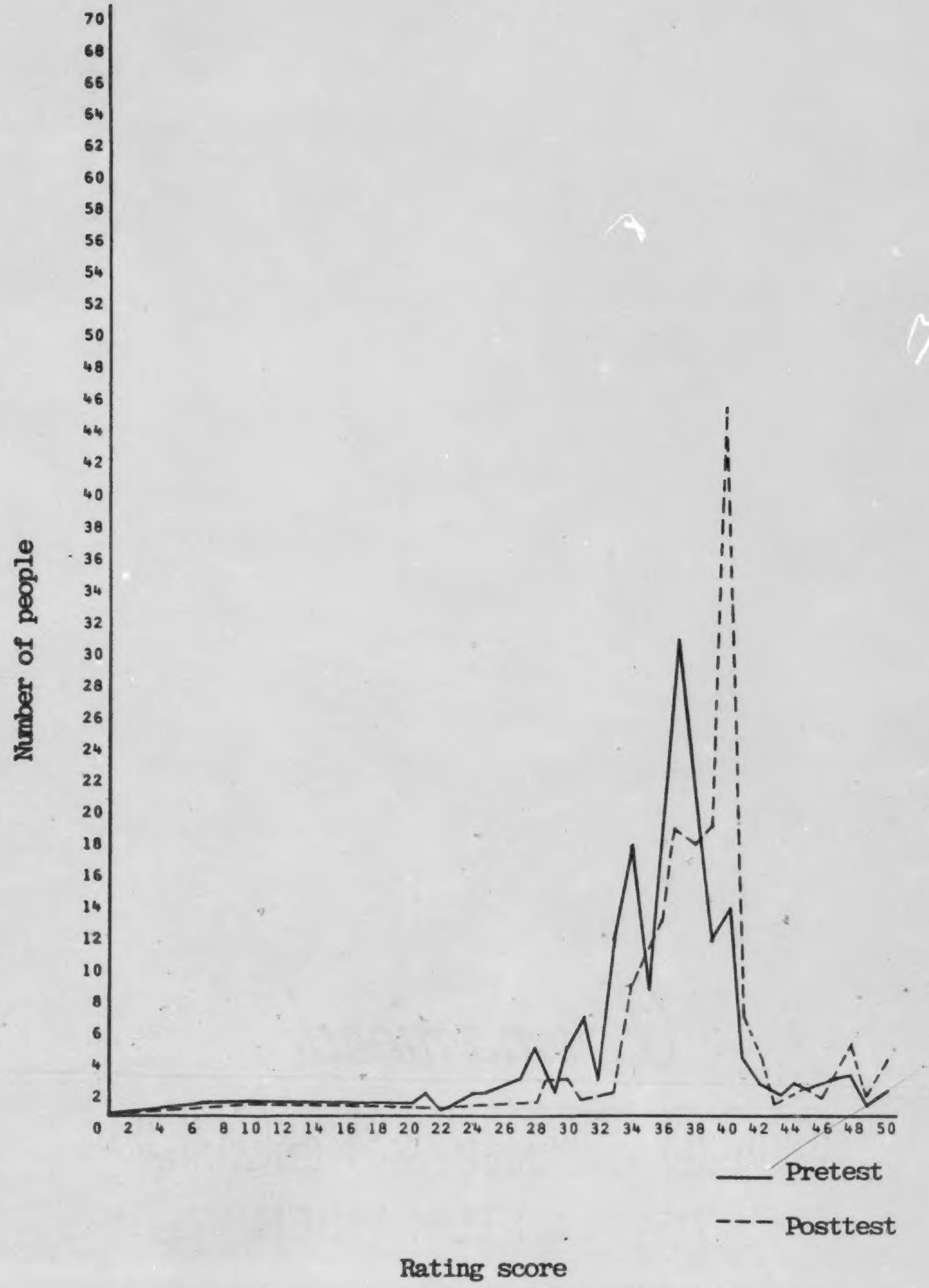

Figure 4. Frequency distribution of attitude rating on pretests and posttests

Paired t tests were again used to test the significance of the difference between the means of the pre and posttests total attitude ratings. The probability of that statistic at .001 level is significant as illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9

t Tests on Means of Pretest and Posttest Total Attitude Ratings

Mean Difference	- 2.4219
Standard Deviation	4.330
Standard Error	.312
t Value	- 7.75
Degree of Freedom	191
2 - Tail Probability	.000

The results of these tests indicated there was also a significant improvement from pre to posttests for the total sample in their attitude toward the role of discussion leader and toward planning and facilitating a group discussion on the topic "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss In Your Life".

Relationship To Treatment

Whereas there was significant improvement noted on knowledge scores and attitude ratings from pre to posttests, this section will present data to answer the question: Was this improvement related to a particular treatment group? The three treatments used were:

(A) View and listen to slide/tape presentation, work through concept lesson, and participation in group discussion on the role of discussion leader,

(B) View and listen to slide/tape presentation plus work through a concept lesson, and

(C) View and listen to slide/tape presentation only.

Difference in Knowledge Gains by Treatment Group

Table 10 shows the means by each treatment group on the knowledge section of both pre and posttests, and differences between the means.

Table 10

Difference Between Pre and Posttest Knowledge Scores by Treatment Group

Treatment	Number	Pretest Means	Posttest Means	Difference
A. Slide/tape concept lesson, and group discussion	67	28.01	32.04	4.03
B. Slide/tape plus concept lessons	62	26.61	30.58	3.97
C. Slide/tape only	63	26.25	29.5	3.30

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on knowledge gain score of subjects participating in each of the three treatments to discover if the improvement was associated with a particular treatment. The three treatment groups did not differ significantly in the extent of knowledge gained. This is shown in Table 11.

Table 11

ANOVA of Knowledge Improvement by Treatment Group

Source	df	ss	mean square	F ratio	Probability
Between Groups	2	20.7710	10.3855	1.06	.35
Within Groups	189	1857.1456	9.8262		
Total	191	1877.9167	9.832		

Differences in Attitude Gains by Treatment Groups

Table 12 shows the means by each treatment group on the attitude section of both pre and posttests and the difference between the means.

Table 12

Differences Between Pretest and Posttest Attitude Scores by Treatment Groups

Treatment	Number	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Mean Difference
A. Slide/tape, concept lesson & group discussion	67	36.54	38.79	2.25
B. Slide/tape plus concept lesson	62	34.69	37.73	3.03
C. Slide/tape only	63	35.11	37.11	2.00

An F ratio obtained from a one-way ANOVA performed on the total attitude score was also not significant. See Table 13.

Table 13

ANOVA on Attitude Improvement by Treatment Group

Source	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Ratio	Probability
Between Groups	2	36.2061	18.1030	.9653	.38
Within Groups	189	3544.6221	18.755		
Total	191	3580.8281	18.748		

Was the improvement associated with a particular treatment group? The results of the one-way ANOVA showed no evidence of any statistically significant difference among groups in improvement scores, either in knowledge or attitude. One could still observe that knowledge scores improved with each additional treatment. However, this did not occur with the attitude scores. The differences could have occurred by random chance. Also, the differences within the treatment groups may be great enough as to offset differences among the groups.

Composition of Treatment Groups

Was the composition of the treatment groups similar? Two-way tables were constructed to see if groups differed substantially in any background variables such as age, educational attainment, number of times being a leader teacher and number of times leading group discussion. Independence of group and background variables was tested using the Chi-square statistic. Analysis of Table 14 shows that the three treatment groups did not differ significantly in amount of school completed, number of times having been a leader teacher or the number of times having led group discussions. It should be noted, however, that the amount of school completed approached the level of statistical significance used in the study.

Table 14

Relationship of Treatment Groups' Composition

Characteristics	Chi-square	df	Significance
Age	20.90901	12	.05
School Completed	19.90743	12	.07
Number of Times Being a Lesson Leader	9.38409	6	.15
Number of Times Leading Group Discussion	12.14887	10	.28

Groups did differ significantly in age. Examination of the data revealed that Treatment Group B (slide/tape presentation plus concept lesson) was slightly older than the other treatment groups.

Leader Characteristics Associated With Improvement

Did the "Discussion Leader Training Program" work best for certain types of learners? Multiple regression was used to explore the relationship between individual improvement and the background variables of age, educational attainment, number of times having been a lesson leader and number of times having led group discussion.

The stepped down multiple regression analysis entered the background variables in the order of amount of change accounted for in knowledge improvement. See Table 15. Seven percent of the variability in knowledge gained can be explained by the demographic variables. Both age and level of schooling were negatively associated with knowledge gain. Significant correlations were found between number of times having been a lesson leader and age and the extent of knowledge gain.

Persons who were younger, less schooled and had greater experience in being a lesson leader were associated with greater increases in their knowledge scores when compared to their higher schooled, older, less experienced counterparts.

None of the variability in attitude improvement was explained significantly by the demographic variables.

Table 15

Leader Characteristics Associated with Knowledge Improvement

Order	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable - Knowledge Improvement		
		beta	F Value	Significance
1	Level of Schooling	-.341	3.447	.065
2	Number of times having been a lesson leader	.751	5.697	.02
3	Age	- .524	5.628	.02

Volunteers' Reactions to "Discussion Leader Training Program"

Response frequencies of volunteer leaders to a rating scale on the "Discussion Leader Training Program" are presented in Table 16. Each of the program component average ratings are shown in Table 17. While on the average, each of the three components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" received "good" (3.03, 3.4 and 3.4 on a 5.0 scale) ratings, the overall rating of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was 3.9 on a 5.0 scale.

Table 16

Volunteer Leaders Rating of the "Discussion Leader Training Program"

Program Aspect	Frequency of Rating Selection						
	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Applicable	No Response
a. The overall teacher training segment of leader training	40	112	31	2			7
b. The slide/tape presentation "You're The Guiding Link"							
1. audio quality	23	93	66	5			5
2. visual quality	25	80	72	7	1		7
3. content	20	85	70	10			7
4. overall	22	87	62	7			14
c. Concept lesson	3	34	66	18	3	64	4
d. The helpfulness of the group discussions	7	23	32	3		125	2
N = 192							

Table 17

Mean Ratings on the "Discussion Leader Training Program"

Program Aspect	Mean Score
a. The overall teacher-training segment of leader training	3.9
b. The slide/tape presentation "You're The Guiding Link"	
1. Audio quality	3.6
2. Visual quality	3.5
3. Content	3.4
4. Overall	3.4
c. Content lesson	3.03
d. Group discussion	3.4

Note: Mean score based on 5=superior; 4=excellent; 3=good; 2=fair; 1=poor

The time allocation for this leader training was sixty minutes spent on subject matter acquisition and sixty minutes on preparing for the discussion leader role. This represents a deviation from the usual Hennepin County practice of spending almost all the time on subject matter acquisition. Subjects were asked in the posttest to rate their feelings with regard to time spent on subject matter (Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss In Your Life), and time spent on preparing for the leader teacher role. Table 18 summarizes their reponses.

Most volunteer leaders felt "just enough" time was spent in this leader training on subject matter presentation and on preparing for the role of leader.

A multiple regression analysis was done to test the relation of background characteristics and the volunteer leaders' feelings about the amount of time spent on the two areas. There was little relationship between the variation in responses and the sample's characteristics as evidenced by results of multiple regressions. Number of times having previously led group discussions explained two percent of the variability in response. No background variables significantly accounted for variation in response to amount of time spent on preparing for discussion leader role.

Table 18

Volunteers Response To Time Expenditure
At The Leader Training Meeting

	Number of People Selecting Response				
Test Item	Too much	Just enough	Too little	No response	Mean
Feeling about amount of subject matter presented at this leader training	6	160	24	2	1.88
Feeling about amount of time spent on helping prepare for role of discussion leader	14	160	17	1	1.9

Note: mean score based on 3=too much; 2=just enough; 1=too little.

Discussion

Four questions were investigated to determine the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program". Each question will be discussed in terms of the findings.

Did leaders increase knowledge scores and attitude ratings after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program? Overall, leaders significantly increased both their knowledge scores and attitude rates after participating in the program.

Which of the three components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was associated with the greatest increases in knowledge and attitude?

The results of the one way ANOVA showed no evidence of any statistically significant difference amount treatment groups in improvement, either in knowledge or attitude. The addition of the concept lesson and group discussion on the role of discussion leader did not add significantly to knowledge of or attitude toward discussion leadership. One might conclude then to show only the slide/tape or, as was pointed out earlier in this chapter, the differences within the treatment groups may be great enough to offset differences among the groups. These findings may be interpreted in light of the time constraints imposed by the leader training.

The literature supports group discussion as an effective technique for fostering adult education; it also points out that group discussion is time consuming. It is dubious if the ten minutes allocated was sufficient to develop the group discussion and planning component of the "Discussion Leader Training Program".

Did the program work better for different learners -- in terms of amount of experience as a lesson leader, amount of experience as a discussion leader, age and level of educational attainment?

The sample of 192 women ranged in age from "25 and under" to "over 65". Ninety seven percent were high school graduates; fifty eight percent completed some post-secondary education. Over eighty percent of the sample had served as volunteer teachers at least once before attending this leader training meeting, eighteen percent were first time lesson leaders. Twelve percent of those attending the study's leader training had never led a group discussion. Nearly forty percent recalled leading one to five discussions. Over twelve percent were experienced discussion leaders, having lead 21 or more discussions.

The model profile of this study's participant is a female, 36-45 years of age, a high school graduate having some post-secondary education, who previously served as a lesson leader and who previously led a group discussion.

Using multiple regression analyses to explore the relationship between individual improvement and background variables it was found that persons who were younger, less schooled and had greater experience in being a lesson leader were associated with greater increases in knowledge scores when compared to their higher schooled, older, less experienced counterparts. This generalization should be viewed with caution because only seven percent of the variability in knowledge responses was explained by the background variables. None of the variability in attitude was explained significantly by the demographic variables.

Having such a heterogeneous clientele makes programming and training challenging. Volunteers bring with them different levels of leadership experience and different levels of subject matter expertise. For example, in this study one participant was a funeral director, another was in charge of bereavement support groups for a major metropolitan hospital, while others expressed they couldn't think of any change, crisis or loss situations that had occurred in their or their familys' lives.

Whereas one might assume that first time leader-teachers would show greatest improvement in knowledge socres and attitude ratings by participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program", the findings in this study do not support this assumption.

Volunteer trainers should not minimize the possible benefits of training experienced leaders on the assumption "they already know all". Nor should experienced leaders be excused from participating in training. Experienced leaders may have to "unlearn" previously acquired inappropriate behaviors, or may have to learn context specific skills. In speculating that there might be some skill and attitude transfer, one might also assume that there would exist a significant relationship between the number of times a leader had been a lesson leader and discussion leader and increases in knowledge and attitudes scores. However, no significant relationship was found between increase in attitude scores and number of times one has been a lesson and discussion leader and no significant relationship was found between increase in knowledge scores and number of times one has been a discussion leader. The volunteer trainer, based on these results, may view each training opportunity as unique.

How did the leader rate the "Discussion Leader Training Program" in terms of technical quality and helpfulness?

Each of the three components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" were rated good on a five point scale from superior to poor. Overall, the total program averaged nearly excellent ratings. Total milieu, or the total experience, rated slightly higher than the individual parts. The slide/tape presentation and group discussion received the same mean ratings (mean 3.4 with 5 being superior). The concept lesson was also rated good, but had a slightly lower mean (3.0).

The higher ratings on the slide/tape presentation and group discussion may be related to participants' greater familiarity with these techniques, and/or participants finding them more stimulating and more directly related to their volunteer task than the concept lesson.

Although this study represented a deviation from the usual Hennepin County leader training meeting procedure, eighty-three percent of the volunteers felt "just enough" time was spent on subject matter presentation and on preparing for the role of discussion leader.

Approximately ten percent of the respondants felt "too little" subject matter and discussion leadership information was presented. Whereas the program developer may feel time was a limitation, the majority of volunteers in this study did not. Perhaps the volunteers had expectations as to what can be realistically accomplished in a two-hour training period or as to the amount of time they were willing to devote to training. Then there are those who never feel there is enough time for anything. Seven percent rated "too much" time was spent on preparing for the role of discussion leader. One might speculate if those respondants are leaders who have served as a discussion leader "21 times or more". This was not supported by the multiple regression analyzing the relationship between individual responses and leaders' background variables.

Based on the data, the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was effective in increasing participants' knowledge of and attitude toward the role of discussion leader. In terms of the program's technical quality and helpfulness, the subjects rated the program as "excellent".

When interpreting the findings, one should recognize the following violations of independence of individual response:

- that people in this study were not selected randomly from population
- that people don't act independently within a class
- and that inference about methods are being made for only one teacher.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATION

Summary of the Problem

One of the unique American aspects of adult education is the widespread use of volunteers. Because of the important contributions volunteers have made and can make, adult educators have long been concerned with the problems of selecting and training leaders for the many informal groupings through which a great deal of adult education is carried on. The Agricultural Extension Service is one adult education organization that relies on more than a million persons who, each year, act as lay leaders in groups and for the projects related to them. Since the existence and effectiveness of agencies such as the Extension Service depends on the effectiveness of its volunteers, it seems imperative to study the process of volunteer training and to evaluate methods or combination of techniques which contribute to volunteer effectiveness.

The significance of this study is to address the practical concern of improving volunteer leader effectiveness. On a theoretical level, it can contribute to an understanding of the leader training process and provide insights into a combination of methodologies for training volunteers in discussion leadership.

Review of Literature

A review of literature was conducted related to study groups and their effectiveness, training volunteers in peer teaching and research and theory on teaching adults. Study groups have historically been a part of U.S. adult education. Membership characteristics have primarily been the focus of investigations of study groups. While evaluations on the effectiveness of study groups in fostering adult learning have been positive, the reported studies have been limited within the Agricultural Extension Service to those where the method-demonstration technique of group instruction has been used.

Faculty for informal study groups are usually adult volunteers trained as peer teachers. Research on adult peer teaching is also limited; much of what has been reported is descriptive. Learning theorists and researchers generally espouse the use of audio-visual aids, concept learning and group discussion as teaching devices. They do not see any one device as an end, but rather as a way to optimize the learning process. A multimedia approach, appealing to several of the learners' senses, enhances learning. Although the literature adequately covers the investigations of many aspects of teaching adults, there is a definite dearth with respect to instructional methods and media for training adult volunteer peer teachers in discussion leadership.

Purpose

From analysis of the problem and the review of research, a "Discussion Leader Training Program" was developed by the investigator. Consisting of three components, the "Discussion Leader Training Program" included a slide/tape presentation, a concept lesson, and group discussion. The slide/tape presentation "You're The

Guiding Link - Learning Link II" introduces the concept discussion leader and covers discussion leading procedures and problems. A concept lesson defines attributes of the concept discussion facilitator and provides experiences in concept discrimination and generalization. The group discussion component provides an opportunity for the leaders to plan a lesson for their local group meeting.

This study was concerned with the evaluation of the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program". To determine its effectiveness, four questions were investigated in this evaluation. These were:

1. Did volunteer leaders increase knowledge scores and attitude ratings after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program"?
2. Which of the three components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was associated with the greatest increase in knowledge and attitude?
3. Did the program work better for different learners -- in terms of amount of experience as a leader, amount of experience as a discussion leader, age and level of educational attainment?
4. How did the leaders rate the "Discussion Leader Training Program" in terms of technical quality and helpfulness?

Study Design

A quasi-experimental design using non-equivalent treatment groups was this study's design. The study subjects were 192 Hennepin County, Minnesota, adult women who received training as discussion leaders for that county's 1979 November Extension Homemaker study topic "Coping With Change Crisis and Loss In Your Life". Three treatment groups were devised. All leaders were pretested before participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program". All leaders received the complete program, but posttesting varied depending on treatment group. Treatment Group A was posttested after the complete treatment -- seeing the slide/tape presentation, working through the concept lesson and participating in group discussion. Treatment Group B participants were posttested after seeing the slide/tape presentation and working through the concept lesson and Group C was posttested after seeing the slide/tape presentation only.

The evaluation instrument involved a pretest and posttest. Designed and administered by the investigator, they were constructed to gather data concerning subjects' knowledge of and attitude toward discussion leadership, subjects' demographic characteristics, and subjects' rating of the technical aspects and helpfulness of the "Discussion Leader Training". One hundred ninety-two useable pretests and posttests were secured.

Date were statistically analyzed for frequency distribution, means and standard deviations. Paired t tests, one-way analysis of variance, multiple regression and Chi square were tests also used to analyze the data.

Findings and Conclusions

The data from this study contributed to the understanding of volunteer characteristics for one Extension Homemaker leader-training meeting:

* Thirty percent were under 36 years of age

About 63% were under 46 years of age

Only 3% were in the over 65 age group

* Nearly 97% were high school graduates

Fifty-eight percent had some post-secondary education

* Over 80% had served as Extension lesson leaders at least once

Approximately one-fifth were first-time leader teachers.

* Twelve percent had never led a group discussion

Nearly 40% recalled leading one to five discussions

Over 20% were experienced in discussion leadership, having led 21 or more discussions.

While recognizing that great diversity was represented, the "typical" participant could be characterized as female, 36-45 years of age, a high school graduate having some post-secondary education, previously served as a lesson leader and previously led a group discussion.

The following relate to the study questions and the findings:

Did volunteer leaders increase knowledge scores and attitude ratings after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program"?

Results of the statistical tests showed there was a significant improvement from pretest to posttests for the total sample in both their knowledge of and attitude toward the role of discussion leader and toward planning and facilitating a group discussion.

Which of the three components of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" was associated with the greatest increase in knowledge and attitude?

The results of a one-way ANOVA showed no evidence of any statistically significance among treatment groups in improvement scores, either in knowledge or attitude. One could observe, however, differences among the means of the treatment groups. The difference within treatment groups may be great enough to offset difference among the groups.

Did the program work better for different learners?

Multiple regression analysis showed little relationship between individual improvement and the background variables of age, educational attainment, number of times having been a lesson leader and number of times having led a group discussion. Seven percent of the variability in knowledge scores showed that persons who were younger, less schooled and had greater experience in being a lesson leader were associated with greater increases in knowledge scores when compared to their older higher level schooled, less experienced counterparts.

How did the leaders rate the "Discussion Leader Training Program" in terms of technical quality and helpfulness?

Overall, the total "Discussion Leader Training Program" averaged nearly excellent ratings on a scale of superior, excellent, good, fair and poor. Each of the three components of the program were rated "good". The slide/tape presentation and group discussion received the same mean ratings (mean 3.4 with 5 = superior). The concept lesson was also rated good, but had a slightly lower mean (3.0) than the other two components. Eighty-three percent of the participants felt "just enough" time was spent on the subject matter presentation and on preparing for the role of discussion leader.

Implications

The findings of this study have a number of implications for administrators, trainers of adult educators, teachers of volunteers and program designers. Administrators of adult education programs after reviewing this study, have a basis for placing a higher priority on leader training meetings as a vehicle for personal development of clientele and for reaching and teaching large groups of clientele. Volunteers as adult peer teachers are a resource that has just begun to be tapped and that holds great potential for the future development of adult education. In light of this potential, the allocation of increased resources by administrators would be justified to continue developing and evaluating peer teaching models and support materials.

For those involved in the education of adult educators who work with volunteers, the following recommendations are made based on this study:

- Instill in the adult educators an appreciation for volunteers' needs and abilities.
- Through pre-service and in-service, encourage adult educators to know and apply adult teaching/learning theory to their programming effort.
- Use the "Discussion Leader Training Program" to train adult educators in discussion leadership and to serve as a training model.
- Offer training in how to use the "Program" and encourage its use in local training programs.
- Point out that the "Program" has been effective in increasing participating knowledge and attitude toward the role of discussion leadership but is not seen applicable to training peer teachers in topics taught by other techniques.

This study's result showed that in a short period of time when information is directly targeted to help volunteers carry out the assignment which they have assumed as a volunteer, volunteers significantly increase their knowledge of and attitude toward the task. These results should encourage teachers of volunteers in their efforts of volunteer training. The data related to volunteer characteristics give guidance to developing volunteer training programs. A keen awareness of the population base include age, educational attainment and leadership experience is invaluable to the adult educator in programming, training and developing materials.

Based on this study, volunteer trainers should not assume that experienced leaders do not need training. It may be the case while they are experienced, they have never acquired a basic knowledge base and have learned from "trial and error", or they may have to "unlearn" previously acquired behaviors, or they may have to learn context specific skills.

While little relationship was found in this study between increase in knowledge and attitude scores and number of times one has been a lesson leader, the trainer of volunteers might view each training opportunity as unique. Experienced lesson leaders may indeed have attended leader training meetings on other study topics and may be experienced in peer teaching techniques other than discussion (i.e. method - demonstration). This being the case, volunteer trainers should not assume the skills involved in those teaching situations are transferred to leading a group discussion.

Although the "Discussion Leader Training Program" is self-contained, to maximize the program, the volunteer trainer must be active in several ways. The volunteer trainer:

- must be committed to the concept of adult peer teaching and the value of training adults for this task.
- should convey enthusiasm in her attitude
- should have knowledge and skill in discussion leadership to model the expected behaviors during the subject matter presentation part of the leader training
- have knowledge and skill in using the "Discussion Leader Training Program"
- have the necessary equipment and material to conduct the program and be able to operate all smoothly so as not to detract from the content and process, and
- be flexible to adapt the program to fit volunteers' needs, and background.

To fully develop the potential of the "Discussion Leader Training Program", a trainer of volunteers might hold a leader training meeting on the topic of adult peer teaching (could be called Helping Others Learn). In the Extension Homemaker setting, this then would provide a two-hour time slot for training for teacher training rather than one. It would also be a method for informing the study group membership of the role and skills of a group discussion leader.

The "Discussion Leader Training Program" was used to train volunteer leaders as teachers. It may also be applicable to training volunteers who serve in other leadership capacities. For example, it may be part of an Extension Home Council meeting - so that Extension Homemaker organization leaders may increase their knowledge of discussion leadership as well as increase their understanding of the expectations of the leader-teachers role.

Trainers of volunteers must be aware of the distinction between a person's ability to do something and the will to do it. In this study leaders, on the average, left the training meetings with a knowledge of and positive attitude toward discussion leadership. However, they may lack the motivation for the assignment as the task approaches. Volunteer trainers might explore ongoing training and providing training follow-up support for the leaders or explore establishing a network between leaders. To promote continuing personal stimulation to the volunteers, trainers should encourage the assumption of leadership roles by the leaders outside of their organization. For example, County Extension staff could encourage leader teachers to assume leadership roles outside of the Extension Homemaker Groups.

Finally, volunteer training is usually seen as an event sponsored by one organization. This investigator is suggesting that training should be planned, conducted and evaluated interorganizationally to utilize all the possible resources. Also it should be seen in the context of a group process and of team relationships.

The format which composed the "Discussion Leader Training Program" may be advocated to other program developers. A slide/tape presentation that is up-beat, visually and auditorily stimulating and narrated in the first person of an experienced volunteer leader teacher did arouse the interest of the leaders and imparts the basic notions of discussion leadership. Art work was used to prevent its outdating. The concept lesson, while rated "good" by the leaders, was less appealing than the two other components. Once a training model such as the "Discussion Leader Training Program" is used for a period of years, the use of concept lessons may be established.

At this point, the concept lesson may be dropped and the discussion/ planning practice time increased. Even without the dropping of the concept lesson, the practice discussion planning time should be increased.

The clientele for which the materials are designed should be involved in the planning. In this case volunteers, volunteer trainers and those involved in the supervision of volunteer trainers acted as design consultants, and probably contributed to its success in meeting the needs for which it was developed.

Implications for Further Research

The findings of this study suggest, either by their result or gaps in the data, the following further research:

- Repeat the study using an evaluator who is not the program developer and implementor to investigate if either or both were operating -- teaching for the test or the social desirability problem. Also as a guard against pretest sensitization, an alternate form could be used for the posttest.
- Since this investigator-teacher has a particular teaching style, replication using a different volunteer trainer would verify if the inferences made in this study are valid.
- Repeat the study statewide and/or in other counties to contribute to the knowlege of homogenity of findings and reliability of the study's design (particularly those situations with other than suburban populations).
- Research the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program" beyond the Extension Homemaker Groups and beyond the

study group structure. What are the advantages/disadvantages of concentrating the training efforts with "open audiences", or with volunteers from other agencies?

- The investigator strongly encourages investigation of behavior outcomes of volunteers after participating in the "Discussion Leader Training Program". What kinds of group discussions do trained leaders hold? How would these compare with leaders who are not trained? How much do group members learn and retain?
- Investigate the volunteer trainer's attitude toward leader training and the way leader training is viewed by the volunteers...and the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program". A related study would be to investigate the relationship between the volunteer trainer's skill in leading group discussion and the effectiveness of the "Discussion Leader Training Program".
- Look at the issue of identifying, recruiting, selecting volunteer peer teachers. Should any volunteer be trained as a discussion leader? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of identifying and intensely training a "core" of discussion leaders to lead the study group when the study topic is appropriately taught by group discussion? How much of this self-selection is already going on?
- Continue research on relative effectiveness and efficiency of delivery systems in adult education, particularly in terms of combining methodologies and the order of methodologies used.

- Research if different training techniques are more effective for different leadership or learning styles.

Havelock and Havelock (1973) discuss that there must be a climate of "institutional readiness" for a change agent to succeed. It would be worthwhile to investigate the "study group readiness" or group member expectations of the leader teachers. There may be a dicotomy between the leader trained to ask questions and elicit information from the members, and the members expecting a lecture and not being willing to participate in the discussion. While it may be important to train the leader, it may be equally important to educate the study group membership.

This program and its evaluation is a modest contribution to training discussion leaders; more elaborate research would contribute to a theoretical framework and would add to the "Program's" sophistication. For example, if those with less than average education desire strong, directive leadership by the group discussion leader while the better educated resented a leader who dominates the group, it would be interesting to test this finding and explore its implication and application to training leader volunteers in discussion leadership.

A unique American contribution to adult education is the use of volunteers. This study provides evidence that volunteers benefit from continuing education. Volunteer continuing education programs -- their development and evaluation -- deserve continual examination to help meet the volunteer's, the clienteles', and the adult education organization's goals.

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APPENDIX A

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA -- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND HOME ECONOMICS, ST. PAUL, MN 55108

Syllabus for Slide Set #337

YOU'RE THE GUIDING LINK

Learning Link II

Lorilee R. Sandmann, Washington County extension agent, Minnesota

Cassette tape:

Slide No.	Script
1 Title slide (Project slide #1 on screen and start tape)	"You're the Guiding Link, Learning Link II"
2 Welcome	So you've been asked to be the study group discussion leader! Great! A discussion lesson can be exciting and productive. To make that happen, you will be the key link.
3 Link, Hello	You will be the learning link. But the members will not learn from you.
4 Discuss and Share	In an exciting and productive discussion, they will learn by expressing their own views. (Have you noticed how it sharpens an idea when you expose it to others)? Perhaps "leader" is not the right description for your role. An extension teacher for

Slide No.	Script
	a discussion study topic has a more subtle, yet very important, role as a facilitator...a guide...
5 Guiding link putting on hat	a guiding learning link. A discussion facilitator guides an exploration of a topic for the purposes of group learning.
6 Can I	No, don't say...but...but I can't do that! You are not being asked to be an overnight expert.
7 Helping Other Learners...	Rather, for a short period of time, you are the person to set up an informal environment to help others learn.
8 Route to Discovery	Remember, your main responsibility as a guiding link is to guide discussion and to stimulate interest in discovering more about the topic.
9 Discussion Topics	You needn't worry about solving everyone's problems. In discussion topics such as coping with change or food additives, you relate to people and their attitudes, feelings, values and beliefs. Usually there are no right or wrong answers.

Slide No.	Script
10 Group involved in cooking	Each of us probably has a preferred style of leading a discussion as a guiding link, but there is a point we should all remember when we put on the guide's hat -- get others involved.
11 We need you	Because you have taken part in a leader training meeting, you have information and training that others in your group want...this will aid you in getting others involved.
12 Active Learners Are Best	"Active" learners are the best learners. How does all this happen? To get ready for this discovery trip, start with careful planning.
13 Planner	As a teacher-planner, decide where you want the discussion to lead. Become as familiar as possible with the subject.
14 Checklist	Reread the written materials and notes taken at the training session. Get to feel comfortable with the topic. Reading other resources will add to your background.

Slide No.	Script
15 Study Topic	I like to do some serious reflecting on what my own knowledge, feelings, values, and attitudes are on the particular study topic.
16 My group, your group	Then I think about members in my group. Our group was interested in understanding more about teens and, in particular, about communicating with teens and listening to them...even though the training session covered understanding teens; communicating with them; and family projects to do with teens.
17 Our members are...	What about your group?...what are their needs?...interests?...ages? What is so fascinating is that because of the group members, their varying backgrounds, and their stages in life, each member will be hearing, seeing, and feeling a topic differently. It's interesting to talk about these differences.
18 Alternative Ways	When planning the discussion, don't plan to change their mind. Rather, plan to help them look at where they are in their life and raise alternative ways of seeing the same subject.

Slide No.	Script
19 Basic Tools	Once you, as the guiding link, have an idea of what major concepts should be covered, then, as a teacher-planner, you have to plan how to cover them. There are many helpful tools for a guiding link! A basic one is to ask questions. You, your partner, or another member in your group asks a question.
20 Question?... Response... Tie Together	As the group responds, tie comments together or raise related questions. Fill in points from the training session or your reading, but do so in the form of questions. Asking..."Have you considered...?" or, "What would happen...?"
21 Talk	Get those learners involved. A successful guiding link is one who gets others to talk. In fact, a talkative leader usually cuts down on group participation.
22 Respect Comfort Levels	Of course, not everyone is at the same comfort level in sharing and discussing matters freely. Respect comfort levels and don't alienate anyone in the group.
23 Questions, Positive Responses	Questions start the discussion and can

Slide No.	Script
	keep the discussion going. You can ask members to clarify or expand on what they have said. If a question is asked of you, refer it to the total group. Another approach to keep the discussion going is for you to use positive response. Positive responses are accepting and understanding; they are not evaluative or judgmental.
24 I'm listening	They can say to another person, "I'm listening to you. I want to understand what you are saying and feeling."
25 Mirror	To tell you the truth, I had to really practice these responses, both verbal and non-verbal, so they came naturally. You may want to, too...but you and your whole group will have better discussions if you use this technique. Try a mirror to practice those non-verbal responses.
26 Games, Role Playing, etc.	Other tools to use as a guiding link are role playing, quizzes, or games. Learning should be fun. Role playing, quizzes, and games can introduce fun and humanness

Slide No.	Script
	in a topic that could get too heavy. After all, you want members to go away with good information but also go away having enjoyed the learning process.
27 Key Points	A cassette tape by an expert on the topic is another tool to use. The tape may be provided at the leader training meeting or you could cut your own by interviewing knowledgeable people. After the group has discussed an aspect of the lesson, you can play the tape as a brief review of key points.
28 Expert	It's reassuring to be a guiding link with experts in your pocket!
29 Spice Rack	If you have time, you might want to collect poems, music, clippings, pictures, and cartoons related to the topic to "spice it up" a bit...or better yet, have club members bring these.
30 Hooking Lady	This preparation ahead of time by the members will "hook" them into the topic.
31 Our group Meeting	Having planned where you will go and how you will get there, you are ready to

Slide No.	Script
	launch the exploration -- your local group meeting.
32 Set the Stage	At your club meeting, set the stage. Arrange a comfortable seating plan, where everyone can see each other. Good discussion is easier to achieve when people are relaxed and comfortable. Start with a warm hello and by making sure everyone is introduced. By way of introduction, perhaps members could share the cartoon or poetry they brought.
33 Think, Listen, React	Explain that the group will learn by thinking about questions or situations and by hearing other's reactions.
	You may want to make a brief statement about the importance of the topic as you see it.
34 Guiding link pointing the way	Now put on your hat, take out your tools, and guide the discussion!
35 1 hour	Usually 1 hour is set aside for the program at your meeting. You might not be be able to cover all the aspects you had

Slide No.	Script
	planned at that time. If one idea becomes important, don't skimp on it to cover the rest of your material.
36 Wrap up!	Do leave at least 5 minutes at the end of the journey to wrap up the discussion. Have the learners point out highlights or major ideas of the journey. This is a good way to determine how much they have learned.
37 A Good Meeting	You might also hear things such as, "It's been a good meeting. I learned at least one thing I didn't know before"...or, "What a super meeting; I got a chance to talk!"
38 Applause	What a great feeling to hear these things. Then you'll know you've been a successful leader-teacher; you've helped others learn; you've become that important guiding link.
39 Coffee	Don't squelch discussion during coffee time. Remember, the learning will continue right through the socializing.

Slide No.	Script
40 Link in Bed	On the night before the meeting, when I'm a leader-teacher, I have sweet dreams becuase of the careful planning I've done. I am prepared; I have a general idea of *where* I will be guiding others...and *how* I will be guiding the learners.
41 What if?	Occasionally, however, the "what if" nightmare creeps in. "What if the group can't get started?"
42 Silence is golden	I could happen and I need to be flexible! I could wait just 1 to 1½ minuntes...the silence may help the learners group their thoughts and help them assume responsibility for the lesson.
43 Pulling idea from bowl	Or I could try having someone rephrase the discussion question, or go around the group asking if someone has a response. Or that first idea could wait for later and I'll try starting the discussion with a different idea.
44 Person covering ears	What if someone dominates the discussion? Ask, "How do the rest of you feel about that idea?" Say, "Okay, that's a good point; may we move on to someone else?"

Slide No.	Script
	You could go around the group again, asking if someone has a response.
45 Link off the path	What if the group gets off the subject? Ask, "Are we off the subject?" Say, "We're talking about teachers' disciplining but our topic is supposed to be family discipline."
46 Discussion Helps	What if interest lags? Be sure the discussion does not remain too long on a single point. Say, "Have we covered that point and may we go on?" Maybe people need more information to help the discussion. Say, "Do we have enough information?" Or, "Is this an area you will need to study on your own?" Use visual aids and examples when the material is difficult.
47 Good discussion...	What if discussion gets too heated? Say, "We have two viewpoints here. Are there any other views?" Emphasize the importance of getting many viewpoints. Say, "This really isn't the place where we can settle that issue, so maybe we should

Slide No.	Script
	move on to the next topic." Remind the group that in this discussion we aren't looking for one right answer. Differing views are welcome.
48 Poof	By being prepared...POOF...the "what if" nightmare disappears.
49 Competence and Confidence	I remind myself that because of the training and preparation, I have competence in the subject and confidence in facilitating a discussion.
50 Shakespeare	I have something the group wants! And William Shakespeare said, "No person can truly help others without helping himself."
51 Link	And you can shout...I am the key link in an important learning activity! I am a guiding link!
52 Good luck	Good luck.

APPENDIX B

Group
Discussion

So you're going to be a study group discussion leader!
This unit is designed to assist you.

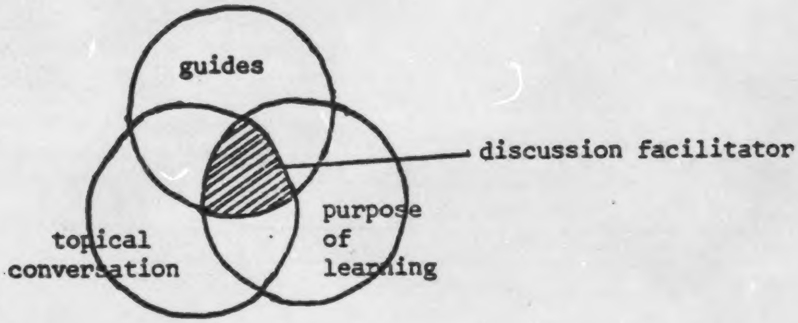
Read the first 3 pages. Study them carefully and proceed as the directions will indicate.

LORILEE R. SANDMANN

Concept: Discussion Facilitator

Critical Attributes:

A discussion facilitator is a person who guides a topical conversation with the purpose of group learning.


guides
discussion facilitator
topical conversation
purpose of learning

An Extension Homemaker discussion facilitator attends the leader training on a topic and is responsible for setting up an informal environment to help local study group members learn.

Variable Attributes:

Although some topics are more appropriate, any subject matter may be covered in discussion lesson.

Information usually comes from the training session, but may come from other sources as well.

The format of learning environment can take a variety of forms.

Example:

1. A discussion facilitator attends the leader training and does reading on the topic.

Not an Example:

2. A discussion facilitator has a 4 year degree on the topic being studied.

Example:

3. June thinks about how to involve the group members in sharing ideas about menopause.

Not an Example:

4. Ann prepares to tell group members what she has learned about menopause.

For your consideration:

Both women are in the planning phase of establishing a learning environment. Which planning would result in guiding others? June probably will be able to guide a topical conversation about menopause by planning to involve group members. In telling the group about menopause, Ann will not be facilitating a discussion; she will merely be lecturing to the members.

PRACTICE 1

The Lakeview Extension Homemakers Study Group has gathered for their monthly meeting. The topic is food additives.

Check examples of discussion facilitators.

_______A. Sally is reading to the group what she has learned at the training sessions about food additives.

_______B. Sue is raising questions about types of food additives to which the members are responding based on their knowledge and experience.

_______C. The group has not mentioned the pros to having food additives. Jane adds this information from her training and reading.

After you have checked the letters next to the examples you think illustrate discussion facilitators, turn the page.

For Your Consideration:

A basic tool in discussion leading is raising questions. A leader asks a question to which members respond based on their knowledge and experience. Granted the group's knowledge and experience may be limited, but rather than a discussion facilitator filling in points from her training session or reading, she should ask a question. In Jane's case, one might be "Why would you want bleached enriched flour over unbleached flour? Or, have you considered when additives would be beneficial?"

Have you been to meetings where you have been read to? Was there any interaction between teacher and students? Was it interesting? How much do you remember? How much did you learn?

PRACTICE 2

While bowling, the conversation turns to ways of building children's self-esteem. Lynn relates what she heard on this topic on a morning talk show.

Why is this instance not an example of the concept discussion facilitator?

Write answer here:

After you have written your response, turn the page.

For Your Consideration:

> Did you notice that this group is a bowling team? What is their primary purpose? Are they having a topical conversation or is it merely casual and incidental? Is Lynn guiding the exchange of views? Is she encouraging others to share their ideas?

PRACTICE 3

Check the examples you think a discussion facilitator might do before a group meeting.

_______ A. Do nothing; the discussion will come naturally.

_______ B. Ask members to bring a meaningful piece of prose, poetry or comic on the topic.

_______ C. Practice positive responses.

_______ D. Practice techniques she will be demonstrating.

_______ E. Outline discussion questions.

After you have made your selections, turn the page.

For your consideration:

What can happen if a discussion is left to its natural course? Someone could dominate, only one side of an issue may be exposed; the conversation may get off track and the topic not covered at all...all of which can be frustrating!

To accomplish the goal of group learning, usually the planning of facilitating techniques is necessary. What are these discussion guide tools? Discussion questions are one. Positive responses keep a discussion going. Positive responses are verbal and nonverbal accepting, understanding statements - not evaluative or judgmental. Hooking the learners into the topic by having them bring something is another way of involving them. Demonstrating is a show and tell method. What do the members do while the leader is demonstrating? They usually are passive. Is this a good technique for guiding a conversation?

PRACTICE 4

If someone is dominating a conversation, what would a discussion facilitator do?

Write answer here?

____

____

____

____

After thinking and writing about this situation, turn the page.

For Your Consideration:

If someone is dominating a discussion, how does one guide a topical conversation to include the ideas and experiences of others in the group?

A discussion facilitator could explicitly point out the problem by saying, "OK, that's a good point; may we move on to someone else."

If the discussion facilitator lets the person continue or interrupts the domineering person and continues herself (in a domineering role) she will probably not promote group interaction and learning.

APPENDIX C

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

(Select one person as recorder/reporter)

About how much time will you have for teaching this?

How much of and what portions of the subject material will you present?

What guide "tools" will you use?

What do you see as some of the problems or difficulties of teaching this lesson to your group? How are you going to overcome these?

GROUP DISCUSSION

CLUB LEADER DISCUSSION

1. What major ideas or subject matter are we going to use?

2. How much time will we have for teaching?

3. How are we going to adapt to the physical facilities at the meeting place?

4. How are we going to share responsibilities; who will do what?

5. What equipment or materials will we need?

Group
Discussion

APPENDIX D

Code 1 ___ ___

Group________________________

Phone #______________________

(Identification # to match parts 1 & 2)

LEADING A DISCUSSION

READ AND ANSWER EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY. MORE THAN ONE ANSWER MAY BE APPROPRIATE.

1. Check all examples you think a discussion facilitator might do before a group discussion meeting.

   ____(1) Do nothing in particular. The discussion will come naturally.

   ____(2) Ask members to bring a meaningful piece of prose, poetry or music on the topic.

   ____(3) Practice positive responses.

   ____(4) Outline discussion questions.

   ____(5) Prepare a short lecture.

2. The leader has introduced the topic "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss" and has asked the first discussion question. No one responds. Check all examples of what she could so as an effective discussion facilitator.

   ____(1) Go on and read from the training material.

   ____(2) Rephrase the question.

   ____(3) Wait 1-2 minutes.

   ____(4) Answer the question herself.

   ____(5) Let the first idea wait for later and try starting the discussion with a different idea.

3. Please indicate characteristics of a discussion facilitator. Check all those which apply.

   ____(1) Tries to solve people's problems.

   ____(2) Helps others to look at where they are at.

   ____(3) Gets others to talk

   ____(4) Brings out alternative ways of looking at a topic.

   ____(5) Is talkative.

4. After an Extension Homemakers meeting where the topic was "Coping With Change", the following comments were heard. Check which would be appropriate responses if the discussion facilitator has done a good job.

____(1) "That was a good meeting. I got a chance to talk!"

____(2) "The leader sure knows a lot."

____(3) "I didn't realize Mildred has experienced the same feelings I have."

____(4) "I had no idea being angry is typical of someone going through a change."

____(5) "That was an interesting talk by the University family life specialist."

5. Check the discussion techniques or guiding tools that would be appropriate to use in discussing Coping With Change.

____(1) Raise questions to which members will respond.

____(2) Play the cassette tape and see if anyone has questions.

____(3) Have members read aloud or individually excerpts from the Extension handout.

____(4) Role play a family situation.

____(5) Present a lecture.

6. A club member contributed inaccurate information which is being discussed by the entire group. Check examples of appropriate ways a leader should handle this situation.

____(1) Read the correct information from the resource material.

____(2) Allow the conversation to follow its natural progression.

____(3) Ask other members to react to the information by sharing their experience.

____(4) Point out that the person has provided inaccurate information.

7. Check all examples you think would be appropriate for a discussion leader if the discussion wanders from the study topic.

____(1) Remind the group of the purpose of the meeting.

____(2) Ask the group about the relevancy of the comments.

____(3) Stop the discussion and tell the group major points of the lesson.

____(4) Allow the discussion to follow its natural course as it will probably come back to the study topic.

8. Which of the following examples would be appropriate activities in planning a discussion lesson?

____(1) Thoroughly study the topic.

____(2) Plan how to summarize the leader-training material.

____(3) Think about how the topic will be introduced.

____(4) Plan to show a film.

____(5) Prepare a list of critical questions.

IN THE NEXT GROUP OF QUESTIONS, PLEASE CHECK AT THE RIGHT THE ANSWER WHICH CORRESPONDS MOST CLOSELY TO YOUR OPINION

SD = Strongly Disagree
D = Disagree
U = Undecided
A = Agree
SA = Strongly Agree

	SD	D	U	A	SA
9. In general I feel comfortable in the role of discussion leader-teacher.					
10. I feel confident I can handle things that interfere with group discussion.					
11. I feel I know enough to carry out my teaching responsibilities.					
12. I feel confident when I use questioning as a discussion technique.					
13. I feel that I know what is necessary of me to be discussion leader for our study lesson.					
14. I feel I have sufficient knowledge to lead a discussion on Coping With Change.					
15. I feel capable of planning a discussion lesson.					
16. I feel at ease in handling an individual who is dominating the discussion.					
17. If the discussion wanders, I feel I could guide the discussion back to the study topic.					
18. I feel comfortable in using positive responses as discussion techniques.					

19. Please check your age.

____(1) 25 or under

____(2) 26-35

____(3) 36-45

____(4) 46-55

____(5) 56-65

____(6) over 65

20. What is the highest grade level you completed in school?

____(1) less than 8 grades

____(2) 8-11

____(3) high school graduate

____(4) attended post secondary training program (vocational school or college

____(5) college graduate

____(6) graduate study

21. How many times have you been a lesson leader-teacher for an extension homemaker meeting?

____(1) 0

____(2) 1-3

____(3) 4 or more

22. How many times have you led a group discussion (for example, at church circle, P.T.A., Homemakers)?

____(1) never

____(2) 1-5

____(3) 6-10

____(4) 11-20

____(5) 21 or more

APPENDIX E

Code 2 , ___ ___

Group________________

Phone #______________

(Identification # to match
parts 1 & 2)

LEADING A DISCUSSION

READ AND ANSWER EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY. MORE THAN ONE ANSWER MAY BE APPROPRIATE.

1. Check all examples you think a discussion facilitator might do before a group discussion meeting.

____(1) Do nothing in particular. The discussion will come naturally.

____(2) Ask members to bring a meaningful piece of prose, poetry or music on the topic.

____(3) Practice positive responses.

____(4) Outline discussion questions.

____(5) Prepare a short lecture.

2. The leader has introduced the topic "Coping With Change, Crisis and Loss" and has asked the first discussion question. No one responds. Check all examples of what she could do as an effective discussion facilitator.

____(1) Go on and read from the training material.

____(2) Rephrase the question.

____(3) Wait 1-2 minutes.

____(4) Answer the question herself.

____(5) Let the first idea wait for later and try starting the discussion with a different idea.

3. In "You're the Guiding Link" which were characteristics of an effective discussion facilitator? Check all those which apply.

____(1) Tries to solve people's problems.

____(2) Helps others to look at where they are at.

____(3) Gets others to talk.

____(4) Bring out alternative ways of looking at the topic.

____(5) Is talkative.

4. After an Extension Homemakers meeting where the topic was "Coping With Change", the following comments were heard. Check which would be appropriate responses if the discussion facilitator has done a good job.

   ____(1) "That was a good meeting. I got a chance to talk!"

   ____(2) "The leader sure knows a lot."

   ____(3) "I didn't realize Mildred has experienced the same feelings I have."

   ____(4) "I had no idea being angry is typical of someone going through a change."

   ____(5) "That was an interesting talk by the University family life specialist."

5. Check the discussion techniques or guiding tools that would be appropriate to use in discussing Coping With Change.

   ____(1) Raise questions to which members will respond.

   ____(2) Play the cassette tape and see if anyone has questions.

   ____(3) Have members read aloud or individually excerpts from the Extension handout.

   ____(4) Role play a family situation.

   ____(5) Present a lecture.

6. A club member contributed inaccurate information which is being discussed by the entire group. Check examples of appropriate ways a leader should handle this situation.

   ____(1) Read the correct information from the resource material.

   ____(2) Allow the conversation to follow its natural progression.

   ____(3) Ask other members to react to the information by sharing their experience.

   ____(4) Point out that the person has provided inaccurate information.

7. Check all examples you think would be appropriate for a discussion leader if the discussion wanders from the study topic.

   ____(1) Remind the group of the purpose of the meeting.

   ____(2) Ask the group about the relevancy of the comments.

   ____(3) Stop the discussion and tell the group major points of the lesson.

   ____(4) Allow the discussion to follow its natural course as it will probably come back to the study topic.

8. Which of the following examples would be appropriate activities in planning a discussion lesson?

____(1) Thoroughly study the topic.

____(2) Plan how to summarize the leader-training material.

____(3) Think about how the topic will be introduced.

____(4) Plan to show a film.

____(5) Prepare a list of critical questions.

IN THE NEXT GROUP OF QUESTIONS, PLEASE CHECK AT THE RIGHT THE ANSWER WHICH CORRESPONDS MOST CLOSELY TO YOUR OPINION

SD = Strongly Disagree
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	SD	D	U	A	SA
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10. I feel confident I can handle things that interfere with group discussion.					
11. I feel I know enough to carry out my teaching responsibilities.					
12. I feel confident when I use questioning as a discussion technique.					
13. I feel that I know what is necessary of me to be discussion leader for our study lesson.					
14. I feel I have sufficient knowledge to lead a discussion on Coping With Change.					
15. I feel capable of planning a discussion lesson.					
16. I feel at ease in handling an individual who is dominating the discussion.					
17. If the discussion wanders, I feel I could guide the discussion back to the study topic.					
18. I feel comfortable in using positive responses as discussion techniques.					

HOW WOULD YOU RATE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING:

	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Applicable
19. The overall teacher-training segment of today's program?						
20. The slide/tape presentation "You're The Guiding Link"? 1. audio quality						
2. visual quality						
3. content						
4. overall						
21. The helpfulness of the small group discussions? 1. in understanding the content Coping With Change.						
2. in using group discussion to present this lesson.						
22. The part of the meeting where you and your partner worked through examples and non-examples of discussion facilitators.						

23. What are your feelings about the amount of subject matter presented at this leader training? Check one.

____too little

____just enough

____too much

24. What are your feelings about the amount of time spent on helping you prepare for your role as a discussion leader?

____too little

____just enough

____too much

25. What were the highlights of the teacher training segment of the program?

____

____

____

26. What aspects of the teacher training could be improved?

____

____

____

27. Any comments or suggestions are welcome here.

____

____

____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM. GOOD LUCK AS A GUIDING LINK!

Lorilee R. Sandmann
November, 1979

APPENDIX F

RE: Methodological Protocol # 1 .

Dear Ms. Sandmann:

Your Methodological Protocol Request for Approval was received in the Committee office on 10/9/79, and has been administratively approved on 10/11/79 as within the guidelines of the referenced Methodological Protocol.

I would like to remind you that it is the responsibility of the investigator to bring to the attention of the Committee any proposed change in the project or any emergent problems that will affect human subjects.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Diane M Johnson

Diane M. Johnson
Executive Secretary to the
Committee on the Use of Human
Subjects in Research